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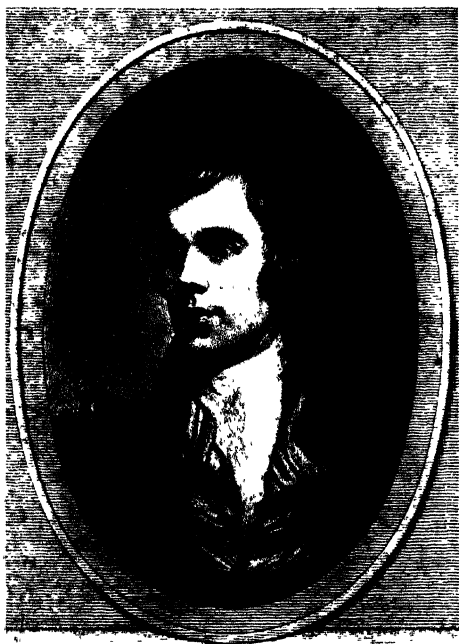
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LITTLE MASTERPIECES OF
ENGLISH POETRY



Robert Burns

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Library of
Little Masterpieces
In Forty-four Volumes

P O E T R Y

Edited by
HENRY VAN DYKE



VOLUME XXI

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LYRICS

INTRODUCTION

THE mark of the pure lyric is not merely its emotional glow, but more specifically its song-like quality.

All true poetry is an utterance of quickened feeling. In ballad, or idyl, or epic, or drama, or reflective verse, the emotion warms and colours the thought, makes the story more graphic and intense, imbues the description with more vivid hues, gives rhythm and suggestive beauty to the language, and lends even to philosophic meditation a glow of imaginative insight and an impulse of deepened passion. But in the pure lyric the feeling seeks expression in the most direct and personal way. It moulds the form as well as the substance of the verse to fit itself. It forgets or disregards all that is foreign to it,—avoids conflicts, neglects restraints and limitations,—and comes right from the heart of the poet in a single strain of song.

I do not mean, of course, that all lyrics are intended or fitted for audible singing. Some of them deal with an emotion so vague and delicate that it is difficult if not impossible to find the fitting melody. Others use a metre so free and irregular that the musician cannot easily make

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his phrases and cadences to follow it. There are many beautiful lyrics, which for one reason or another, have never been set to music. But in all of them, if I mistake not, we can feel the close and living resemblance to song, and recognize, more clearly than in any other department of poetry, the truth of Milton's phrase which describes it as "more simple, sensuous and passionate" than rhetoric. A lyric is a human emotion uttered in verbal melody.

This does not exclude, as some persons seem to fancy, the presence of clear thought, of conscious recollection, of distinct imagery, or of delicate and careful art in the choice of words and metrical forms. The emotions of a thinking creature do not come to him without reason or relationship like an earthquake or a thunderstorm. They have in them an element of perception, of swift reflection, of subtle association. They are vitally connected, in some mysterious way, with an experience, an idea, a memory, a hope, a fear, a scene in nature, a personal relation, an event in life. Bare physical sensations, like cold or hunger; blind passions of anger or desire which stir within us without a reason or a definite object are not fit material for poetry. "The lyrical cry" is not an inarticulate shriek, nor an imbecile murmur. It is the self-expression of a reasonable creature under the impulse and influence of a real and personal feeling. And the emotion which it utters is a response to something perceived or imagined.

Introduction

I would not ask, then, as some critics do, that a lyric should be thoughtless and careless, void of ideas, misty in utterance, and free from the restraining touch of art. I would ask only that it should have at its heart a vital and controlling emotion expressed in a song-like way; and I would measure its rank as a lyric, by the truth and beauty, the tenderness or the power, of the feeling, and by the purity of the art, (in its most perfect result hiding the traces of its own labour,) by which the poem sings us into harmony with the poet's mood.

It is thus that the pure lyrics in this volume have been chosen from the rich stores of English verse. They range in tone from the simplest note of joy at the coming of the spring, to the deepest note of confidence and immortal hope at the passing of human life into the unknown.

The "Songs of Nature" are lyrical expressions of man's feeling towards the changing seasons, the living creatures who inhabit the earth with him, the light and the darkness, the sea and the stars. Some of the poems in this group border closely upon the region of Descriptive and Reflective Verse; and it would be possible, of course, to place them there; just as some of the poems which are to be included in that volume might be transferred to this. In any arrangement or classification of poetry there is always room for variation, according to the taste or the point of view of the person who is making it. To me the nature-songs which are collected here

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seem to belong together because they simply take it for granted that the tie which binds our hearts to nature is real; and they express the various feelings which spring out of that tie, not philosophically, but in the form of a personal and heartfelt melody. This is as true of Wordsworth's deeper lyric *To the Cuckoo*, as it is of the merry little cuckoo-song from the thirteenth century with which the volume begins.

The "Love-Songs," which form the largest group in the book, have the same personal quality. They do not reason about love: they express it. They give a musical voice to its hopes and its fears, its joy and its pain, its longing, its triumph, and its anguish.

The "Songs of Patriotism" are all too few in number. This is partly because the patriotic feeling has found a fuller expression in ballads narrating the famous deeds of heroism, and in odes dealing on a broader scale with the complex sentiments which are united in love of country. Perhaps, also the comparative rarity of patriotic lyrics of true poetic value is due, in part, to something in this emotion which naturally tends to express itself in eloquence rather than in the imaginative form proper to poetry. One very beautiful poem in this group needs a word of explanation. The "Dark Rosaleen" is the poetic name for Ireland.

The "Songs of Life's Pilgrimage" are a group of lyrics in many keys, rising out of human experience on the way through the world. The

Introduction

reader who studies the arrangement thoughtfully will see that it passes from one subject to another by a gradation which is simple and natural: first, the poet's ideal of life; then some of the joys of living; then, the home and the fireside, with songs of children; then, good fellowship and merry company; then, the memories of "Auld Lang Syne"; then, sadness and parting, toil, disappointment and sorrow; and last of all the comforting faith and the uplifting hope. Several of these last poems might, perhaps, have been classed with the hymns; but again I can only say that I have put them into this volume because they seemed to me more clearly lyrical, more emotional and simple; and because without some expression of just these human feelings the volume would be incomplete as an utterance of the inner life of man in song.

The Odes and Sonnets have been reserved for a separate volume, which must also be regarded as belonging to lyrical verse. But in the ode, the lyric is enlarged and expanded, and the progressive treatment of a single subject lends both variety to the emotions and a peculiar loftiness to the expression. In the sonnet, the strict limitations of the form almost always result in bringing in a larger element of thought and reflection, and there is usually a contrast, or at least a change, of feeling between the octave and the sestet.

Nowhere have I regretted more than in these two volumes, the restriction which precludes the

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use of the work of poets who are living. For there is no department of poetry in which better work is being done to-day than in the lyrical. And though the world knows it not, many of these modern lyrics will some day find a place among the little masterpieces.

HENRY VAN DYKE.

SONGS OF NATURE

CUCKOO SONG

SUMER, is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu!
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springth the wude nu—
Sing cuccu! 5

Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu;
Bulluc sterteth, bukke verteth,
Murie sing cuccu! 9

Cuccu, cuccu, well singes thu, cuccu:
Ne swike thu naver nu;
Sing cuccu, nu, sing cuccu,
Sing cuccu, sing cuccu, nu! 13

C. 1250

Anonymous.

THE NIGHT IS NEAR GONE

HEY! now the day dawis;
The jolly cock crawis;
Now shroud is the shawis
Thro' Nature anon.

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The thissel-cock cryis
On lovers wha lyis :
Now skaillis the skyis ;
The nicht is neir gone. 8

The fieldis ouerflowis
With gowans that growis,
Quhair lilies like low is
As red as the rone.
The turtle that true is,
With notes that renewis,
Her pairty pursuis :
The nicht is neir gone. 16

Now hairtis with hindis
Conform to their kindis,
Hie tursis their tyndis
On ground quhair they grone.
Now hurchonis, with hairis,
Aye passis in pairis ;
Quhilk duly declaris
The nicht is neir gone. 24

The season excellis
Through sweetness that smellis ;
Now Cupid compellis
Our hairtis echone
On Venus wha waikis,
To muse on our maikis,
Syne sing for their saikis—
'The nicht is neir gone!' 32

The Night is Near Gone

All courageous knichtis
Aganis the day dichtis
The breist-plate that bright is
 To fight with their fone.
The stonèd steed stampis,
Through courage, and crampis,
Syne on the land lampis :
 The nicht is neir gone.

40

The freikis on feildis
That wight wapins weildis
With shyning bright shieldis
 At Titan in trone ;
Stiff speiris in reistis
Ouer corseris crestis
Are broke on their breistis :
 The nicht is neir gone.

48

So hard are their hittis,
Some sweysis, some sittis,
And some perforce flittis
 On ground quhile they grone.
Syne groomis that gay is
On blonkis that brayis
With swordis assayis :—
 The nicht is neir gone.

56

Alexander Montgomerie.

HYMN TO DIANA

Foom Cynthia's Revels

QUEEN and Huntress, chaste and fair,
Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair
State in wonted manner keep :
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess excellently bright. 6

Earth, let not thy envious shade
Dare itself to interpose ;
Cynthia's shining orb was made
Heaven to clear when day did close ·
Bless us then with wished sight,
Goddess excellently bright. 12

Lay thy bow of pearl apart
And thy crystal-shining quiver ;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever :
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright ! 18

1601.

Ben Jonson.

SPRING'S WELCOME

From Campaspe

WHAT bird so sings, yet so does wail?
O 't is the ravish'd nightingale.
Jug, jug, jug, jug, tereu' she cries,
And still her woes at midnight rise
Brave prick-song! Who is 't now we hear?
None but the lark so shrill and clear,
Now at heaven's gate she claps her wings,
The morn not waking till she sings
Hark, hark, with what a pretty throat
Poor robin redbreast tunes his note! 10
Hark how the jolly cuckoos sing
Cuckoo' to welcome in the spring!
Cuckoo' to welcome in the spring!

1584.

John Lyly

SPRING

From Summer's Last Will and Testament

SPRING, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant
king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a
ring,

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Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo! 4

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo! 8

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit.
In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!
Spring! the sweet Spring! 13

1600.

Thomas Nash

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

As it fell upon a day,
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap, and birds did sing,
Trees did grow, and plants did spring;
Everything did banish moan,
Save the nightingale alone.
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Leaned her breast up-till a thorn; 10
And there sung the doleful'st ditty
That to hear it was great pity.
"Fie, fie, fie!" now would she cry;
"Teru, teru," by and by;

To the Nightingale

That, to hear her so complain,
Scarce I could from tears refrain;
For her griefs, so lively shown,
Made me think upon mine own
“ Ah! ” (thought I) “ thou mourn’st in vain;
None takes pity on thy pain; 20
Senseless trees, they cannot hear thee;
Ruthless bears, they will not cheer thee;
King Pandion, he is dead;
All thy friends are lapped in lead:
All thy fellow-birds do sing,
Careless of thy sorrowing!
Whilst as fickle Fortune smiled,
Thou and I were both beguiled.
Every one that flatters thee
Is no friend in misery. 30
Words are easy, like the wind;
Faithful friends are hard to find
Every man will be thy friend
Whilst thou hast wherewith to spend;
But, if stores of crowns be scant,
No man will supply thy want.
If that one be prodigal,
‘ Bountiful ’ they will him call;
And, with such-like flattering,
‘ Pity but he were a king ’ 40
If he be addict to vice,
Quickly him they will entice;
If to women he be bent,
They have at commandment;
But if Fortune once do frown,
Then farewell his great renown:

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

They that fawned on him before,
Use his company no more
He that is thy friend indeed,
He will help thee in thy need;
If thou sorrow, he will weep;
If thou wake, he cannot sleep.
Thus, of every grief in heart,
He with thee doth bear a part
These are certain signs to know
Faithful friend from flattering foe."

1598.

Richard Barnfield

WHEN DAISIES PIED

From *L. L. L.*

WHEN daisies pied and violets blue,
And lady-smocks all silver white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
Cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo!—O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are ploughmen's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,

Over Hill, Over Dale

And maidens bleach their summer smocks,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men; for thus sings he,
 Cuckoo!
Cuckoo, cuckoo!—O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear!

18

1598

William Shakespeare

OVER HILL, OVER DALE

From M. N. Dream

OVER hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere,
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear

1

1600.

William Shakespeare.

THE FAIRY LIFE

From The Tempest

I

WHERE the bee sucks, there suck I :
In a cowslip's bell I lie ;
There I couch, when owls do cry :
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now,
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough !

II

Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands :
Courtsied when you have and kiss'd 10
The wild waves whist,
Foot it featly here and there ;
And, sweet Sprites, the burthen bear.
Hark, hark !
Bow-wow
The watch-dogs bark :
Bow-wow.
Hark, hark ! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry, Cock-a-diddle-dow ! 20

1623.

William Shakespeare.

UNDER THE GREENWOOD TREE

From As You Like It

UNDER the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall we see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather 8

Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets—
Come hither, come hither, come hither!
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather 16

1623.

William Shakespeare

WHEN ICICLES HANG BY THE WALL

From *L. L. L.*

WHEN icicles hang by the wall,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
 To-whit!
To-who!—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot 9

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
 To-whit!
To-who!—a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot 18

1598. *William Shakespeare.*

THE SIRENS' SONG

STEER, hither steer your wingèd pines,
All beaten mariners!
Here lie Love's undiscover'd mines,
A prey to passengers—
Perfumes far sweeter than the best
Which make the Phoenix' urn and nest.
Fear not your ships,
Nor any to oppose you save our lips;
But come on shore,
Where no joy dies till Love hath gotten more. 10

For swelling waves our panting breasts,
Where never storms arise,
Exchange, and be awhile our guests:
For stars gaze on our eyes.
The compass Love shall hourly sing,
And as he goes about the ring,
We will not miss
To tell each point he nameth with a kiss
—Then come on shore,
Where no joy dies till Love hath gotten more 20

1614 1772

William Browne, of Tavistock

INVOCATION

PHŒBUS, arise !
And paint the sable skies
With azure, white, and red ;
Rouse Memnon's mother from her Tithon's bed,
That she thy career may with roses spread ;
The nightingales thy coming each-where sing ;
Make an eternal spring !
Give life to this dark world which lieth dead ;
Spread forth thy golden hair
In larger locks than thou wast wont before, 10
And emperor-like decore
With diadem of pearl thy temples fair :
Chase hence the ugly night,
Which serves but to make dear thy glorious light.
This is that happy morn,
That day, long wished day
Of all my life so dark
(If cruel stars have not my ruin sworn
And fates not hope betray),
Which only white deserves 20
A diamond for ever should it mark :
This is the morn should bring unto this grove
My Love, to hear and recompense my love.
Fair King, who all preserves,

Echo

But show thy blushing beams,
And thou two sweeter eyes
Shalt see than those which by Peneus' streams
Did once thy heart surprise :
Nay, suns, which shine as clear
As thou when two thou did to Rome appear. 30
Now, Flora, deck thyself in fairest guise :
If that ye, winds, would hear
A voice surpassing far Amphion's lyre,
Your stormy chiding stay ;
Let zephyr only breathe
And with her tresses play,
Kissing sometimes these purple ports of death.
The winds all silent are ;
And Phœbus in his chair
Ensaffroning sea and air 40
Makes vanish every star :
Night like a drunkard reels
Beyond the hills to shun his flaming wheels :
The fields with flowers are deck'd in every hue,
The clouds bespangle with bright gold their blue :
Here is the pleasant place—
And everything, save Her, who all should grace.

1616.

William Drummond.

ECHO

From Comus

SWEET Echo, sweetest Nymph that liv'st
unseen
Within thy airy shell
By slow Meander's margent green,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And in the violet imbroider'd vale
Where the love-lorn Nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad Song mourneth well:
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle Pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O if thou have
Hid them in som flowry Cave, 10
Tell me but where,
Sweet Queen of Parley, Daughter of the
Sphere!
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heav'n's
Harmonies!

1634.

John Milton.

SABRINA

From Comus

SABRINA fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping
hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen and save! 8

Listen and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus,
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace,

The Spirit's Epilogue

By hoary Nereus wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
And the Songs of Sirens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
Sleeking her soft alluring locks,
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-pav'n bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have
Listen and save! 31

1634.

John Milton.

THE SPIRIT'S EPILOGUE

From Comus

To the Ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky:
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the Gardens fair

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree :
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring, 10
The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring.
That there eternal Summer dwells,
And west winds, with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard, and Cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfl'd scarf can shew, 20
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of Hyacinth, and roses
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits th' Assyrian Queen ;
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid her fam'd son advanc'd,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet intranc'd, 30
After her wandring labours long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal Bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy ; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run

Love's Emblems

Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend, 40
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the Moon.

Mortals that would follow me,
Love virtue, she alone is free,
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher then the spheary chime ;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heav'n itself would stoop to her.

1634. 1645.

John Milton.

LOVE'S EMBLEMS

From Valentinian

Now the lusty spring is seen ;
Golden yellow, gaudy blue,
Daintily invite the view :
Everywhere on every green
Roses blushing as they blow,
And enticing men to pull,
Lilies whiter than the snow,
Woodbines of sweet honey full :
All love's emblems, and all cry,
" Ladies, if not pluck'd, we die." 10

Yet the lusty spring hath stay'd ;
Blushing red and purest white
Daintily to love invite
Every woman, every maid :

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Cherries kissing as they grow,
And inviting men to taste,
Apples even ripe below,
Winding gently to the waist:
All love's emblems, and all cry,
"Ladies, if not pluck'd, we die" 20

1647.

John Fletcher.

THE GRASSHOPPER

O THOU that swing'st upon the waving hair
Of some well-fillèd oaten beard,
Drunk every night with a delicious tear
Dropt thee from heaven, where th' art
rear'd! 4

The joys of earth and air are thine entire,
That with thy feet and wings dost hop and fly;
And when thy poppy works, thou dost retire
To thy carved acorn-bed to lie. 8

Up with the day, the Sun thou welcom'st then,
Sport'st in the gilt-plaits of his beams,
And all these merry days mak'st merry men,
Thyself, and melancholy streams. . . . 12

1649

Richard Lovelace

CORINNA 'S GOING A-MAYING

GET up, get up for shame! The blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn

Corinna 's Going a-Maying

See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colours through the air :
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree !
Each flower has wept and bow'd toward the east
Above an hour since, yet you not drest ;
Nay ! not so much as out of bed ?
When all the birds have matins said
And sung their thankful hymns, 't is sin,
Nay, profanation, to keep in,
Whereas a thousand virgins on this day
Spring, sooner than the lark, to fetch in May. 14

Rise and put on your foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the spring-time, fresh and
green,
And sweet as Flora. Take no care
For jewels for your gown or hair
Fear not ; the leaves will strew
Gems in abundance upon you .
Besides, the childhood of the day has kept,
Against you come, some orient pearls unwept
Come, and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night .
And Titan on the eastern hill
Retires himself, or else stands still
Till you come forth ! Wash, dress, be brief in
praying :
Few beads are best when once we go a-Maying. 28

Come, my Corinna, come ; and coming, mark
How each field turns a street, each street a park,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Made green and trimm'd with trees: see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch: each porch, each door, ere this,
An ark, a tabernacle is,
Made up of white-thorn neatly interwove;
As if here were those cooler shades of love.
Can such delights be in the street
And open fields, and we not see 't?
Come, we 'll abroad: and let's obey
The proclamation made for May,
And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying. 42

There's not a budding boy or girl this day
But is got up and gone to bring in May.
A deal of youth ere this is come
Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
Some have despatch'd their cakes and cream,
Before that we have left to dream:
And some have wept and woo'd, and plighted
troth,
And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth:
Many a green-gown has been given;
Many a kiss, both odd and even:
Many a glance, too, has been sent
From out the eye, love's firmament;
Many a jest told of the keys betraying
This night, and locks pick'd: yet we're not
a-Maying! 56

Come, let us go, while we are in our prime;
And take the harmless folly of the time.

To Blossoms

• We shall grow old apace, and die
Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short, and our days run
As fast away as does the sun;
And, as a vapour or a drop of rain,
Once lost, can ne'er be found again,
So when or you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade,
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drown'd with us in endless night.
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
Come, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying. 70
1648. *Robert Herrick.*

TO BLOSSOMS

FAIR pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past
But you may stay yet here awhile,
To blush and gently smile;
And go at last 6

What! were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'T was pity Nature brought ye forth,
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite. 12

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave;
And after they have shown their pride
Like you awhile, they glide
Into the grave. 18

1648

Robert Herrick.

TO DAFFODILS

FAIR Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon:
As yet the early-rising Sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along. 10

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a Spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the Summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again. 20

1648.

Robert Herrick.

TO VIOLETS

WELCOME, maids of honour!
 You do bring
 In the Spring,
And wait upon her 4

She has virgins many,
 Fresh and fair,
 Yet you are
More sweet than any 8

You 're the maiden Posies,
 And, so grac'd,
 To be plac'd
'Fore damask roses 12

Yet though thus respected,
 By-and-by
 Ye doe lie,
Poor girls! neglected. 16

1648.

Robert Herrick

TO MEADOWS

YE have been fresh and green,
 Ye have been fill'd with flowers,
And ye the walks have been
 Where maids have spent their hours. 4

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

You have beheld how they
With wicker arks did come
To kiss and bear away
The richer cowslips home. 8

You 've heard them sweetly sing,
And seen them in a round:
Each virgin like a spring,
With honeysuckles crown'd. 12

But now we see none here
Whose silv'ry feet did tread,
And with dishevell'd hair
Adorn'd this smoother mead. 16

Life unthrifts, having spent
Your stock and needy grown,
You 're left here to lament
Your poor estates, alone. 20

1648.

Robert Herrick.

MY HEART 'S IN THE HIGHLANDS

My heart 's in the Highlands, my heart is not
here;
My heart 's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart 's in the Highlands, wherever I go.

To the Cuckoo

Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North,
The birth-place of valour, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love. 8

Farewell to the mountains high cover'd with
snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below;
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring
floods!
My heart 's in the Highlands, my heart is not
here,
My heart 's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer:
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart 's in the Highlands, wherever I go. 16
1790. *Robert Burns.*

TO THE CUCKOO

HAIL, beauteous stranger of the grove!
Thou messenger of spring!
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome sing. 4

What time the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear;
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year? 8

Delightful visitant! with thee
I hail the time of flowers,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers. 12

The school-boy, wandering through the
wood
To pull the primose gay,
Starts, the new voice of Spring to hear,
And imitates thy lay. 16

What time the pea puts on the bloom,
Thou fliest thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another spring to hail. 20

Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year! 24

O, could I fly, I 'd fly with thee!
We 'd make, with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Companions of the Spring. 28

1770.

John Logan.

TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice? 4

To the Cuckoo

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear,
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off, and near. 8

Though babbling only to the Vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours. 12

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery; 16

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou were still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen. 24

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again. 28

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

O blessèd bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place;
That is fit home for Thee!

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1804. 1807.

William Wordsworth.

TO THE SKYLARK

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares
abound?
Or while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music
still!

[To the last point of vision, and beyond
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted
strain
—'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond—
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to
sing
All independent of the leafy Spring.]

12

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine,

Daffodils

Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam;
True to the kindred points of Heaven and
Home. 18

1827.

William Wordsworth.

DAFFODILS

I WANDER'D lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze. 6

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance. 12

The waves beside them danced; but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought: 18

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils. 24

1804 1807.

William Wordsworth.

THE TIGER

TIGER, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry? 4

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire? 8

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet? 12

What the hammer? What the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp? 16

To Night

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee? 20

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry? 24

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William Blake.

TO NIGHT

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,
 Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave
Where all the long and lone daylight
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
 Swift by thy flight! 7

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
 Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander oe'r city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
 Come, long sought! 14

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

When I arose and saw the dawn,
 I sigh'd for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turn'd to his rest
Lingering like an unloved guest,
 I sigh'd for thee. 21

Thy brother Death came, and cried
 Would'st thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmur'd like a noon-tide bee
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Would'st thou me?—And I replied
 No, not thee! 28

Death will come when thou art dead,
 Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovèd Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
 Come soon, soon! 35

1821. 1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

HYMN OF PAN

From the forests and highlands
 We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
 Where loud waves are dumb
 Listening to my sweet pipings.

Hymn of Pan

The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening to my sweet pipings. 12

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
And all dark Tempe lay
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
The light of the dying day,
Succeeded by my sweet pipings.
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,
And the Nymphs of the woods and waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow
Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,
With envy of my sweet pipings. 24

I sang of the dancing stars,
I sang of the dædal Earth,
And of Heaven—and the giant wars,
And Love, and Death, and Birth,—
And then I changed my pipings,—
Singing how down the vale of Menalus
I pursued a maiden and clasp'd a reed:
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus!
It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed:
All wept, as I think both ye now would,
If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
At the sorrow of my sweet pipings. 36

1820. 1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

I HEARD the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls !
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls ! 4

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above ;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love. 8

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes. 12

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose ;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows. 16

O holy Night ! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before !
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more. 20

To the Evening Star

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this
prayer
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most
fair,
The best-beloved Night! 24

1839. *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.*

TO THE EVENING STAR

STAR that bringest home the bee,
And sett'st the weary labourer free!
If any star shed peace, 't is thou
That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
Are sweet as hers we love. 6

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odours rise,
Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard
And songs when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirr'd
Curls yellow in the sun. 12

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse;
Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart. 18

1824. *Thomas Campbell.*

THE LIGHT OF STARS

THE night is come, but not too soon;
And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
Drops down behind the sky. 4

There is no light in earth or heaven
But the cold light of stars;
And the first watch of night is given
To the red planet Mars. 8

Is it the tender star of love?
The star of love and dreams?
Oh no! from that blue tent above
A hero's armor gleams. 12

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies,
The shield of that red star. 16

O star of strength! I see thee stand
And smile upon my pain;
Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand,
And I am strong again. 20

Daybreak

Within my breast there is no light
But the cold light of stars ;
I give the first watch of the night
To the red planet Mars. 24

The star of the unconquered will,
He rises in my breast,
Serene, and resolute, and still,
And calm, and self-possessed. 28

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art,
That readest this brief psalm,
As one by one thy hopes depart,
Be resolute and calm. 32

Oh, fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long,
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong 36

1839.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

DAYBREAK

A WIND came up out of the sea,
And said, "O mists, make room for me!"

It hailed the ships, and cried, "Sail on,
Ye mariners, the night is gone." 4

And hurried landward far away,
Crying, "Awake! it is the day"

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

It said unto the forest, "Shout!
Hang all your leafy banners out!" 8

It touched the wood-bird's folded wing,
And said, "O bird, awake and sing!"

And o'er the farms, "O chanticleer,
Your clarion blow; the day is near." 12

It whispered to the fields of corn,
"Bow down, and hail the coming morn!"

It shouted through the belfry-tower,
"Awake, O bell! proclaim the hour." 16

It crossed the churchyard with a sigh,
And said, "Not yet! in quiet lie."

1857

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

THE EVENING WIND

SPIRIT that breathest through my lattice, thou
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day!
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow;
Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
Riding all day the wild blue waves till now,
Roughening their crests, and scattering high
their spray,
And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea! 18

The Evening Wind

Nor I alone,—a thousand bosoms round
Inhale thee in the fulness of delight ;
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
Livelier, at coming of the wind of night ;
And languishing to hear thy welcome sound,
Lies the vast inland, stretched beyond the sight.
Go forth into the gathering shade ; go forth,—
God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth ! 16

Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest ;
Curl the still waters, bright with stars ; and
rouse
The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
Summoning, from the innumerable boughs,
The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his breast.
Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows
The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
And where the o'ershadowing branches sweep
the grass. 24

Stoop o'er the place of graves, and softly sway
The sighing herbage by the gleaming stone,
That they who near the churchyard willows stray,
And listen in the deepening gloom, alone,
May think of gentle souls who passed away,
Like thy pure breath, into the vast unknown ;
Sent forth from heaven among the sons of men,
And gone into the boundless heaven again 32

The faint old man shall lean his silver head
To feel thee ; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And dry the moistened curls that overspread
His temples, while his breathing grows more
deep;
And they who stand about the sick man's bed,
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,
And softly part his curtains to allow
Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow. 40

Go—but the circle of eternal change,
Which is the life of nature, shall restore,
With sounds and sense from all thy mighty
range,
Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once more;
Sweet odors in the sea-air, sweet and strange,
Shall tell the homesick mariner of the shore;
And, listening to the murmur, he shall deem
He hears the rustling leaf and running stream. 48
1830. *William Cullen Bryant.*

THE MIDGES DANCE ABOON THE BURN

THE midges dance aboon the burn;
The dews begin to fa';
The pairtricks down the rushy holm
Set up their e'ening ca'.
Now loud and clear the blackbird's sang
Rings through the briery shaw,
While, flitting gay, the swallows play
Around the castle wa'. 8

Flowers

Beneath the golden gloamin' sky
The mavis mends her lay;
The redbreast pours his sweetest strains
To charm the lingering day;
While weary yeldrins seem to wail
Their little nestlings torn,
The merry wren, frae den to den,
Gaes jinking through the thorn. 16

The roses fauld their silken leaves,
The foxglove shuts its bell;
The honeysuckle and the birk
Spread fragrance through the dell.
Let others crowd the giddy court
Of mirth and revelry,
The simple joys that nature yields
Are dearer far to me. 24

1807?

Robert Tannahill.

FLOWERS

I WILL not have the mad Clytie,
Whose head is turned by the sun;
The tulip is a courtly quean,
Whom, therefore, I will shun:
The cowslip is a country wench,
The violet is a nun;—
But I will woo the dainty rose,
The queen of every one. 8

The pea is but a wanton witch,
In too much haste to wed,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And clasps her rings on every hand ;
The wolfsbane I should dread ;
Nor will I dreary rosemarye,
That always mourns the dead ;
But I will woo the dainty rose,
With her cheeks of tender red. 16

The lily is all in white, like a saint,
And so is no mate for me ;
And the daisy's cheek is tipped with a blush,
She is of such low degree ;
Jasmine is sweet, and has many loves,
And the broom 's betrothed to the bee ;—
But I will plight with the dainty rose,
For fairest of all is she. 24

1827.

Thomas Hood.

SONG

A SPIRIT haunts the year's last hours
Dwelling amid these yellowing bowers :
To himself he talks ;
For at eventide, listening earnestly,
At his work you may hear him sob and sigh
In the walks ;
Earthward he boweth the heavy stalks
Of the mouldering flowers :
Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
Over its grave i' the earth so chilly ;
Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
Heavily hangs the tiger-lily. 12

The Throstle

The air is damp, and hush'd, and close,
As a sick man's room when he taketh repose
 An hour before death;
My very heart faints and my whole soul grieves
At the moist rich smell of the rotting leaves,
 And the breath
 Of the fading edges of box beneath,
And the year's last rose.
 Heavily hangs the broad sunflower
 Over its grave i' the earth so chilly;
 Heavily hangs the hollyhock,
 Heavily hangs the tiger-lily. 24

1830

Lord Tennyson.

THE THROSTLE

' SUMMER is coming, summer is coming.
 I know it, I know it, I know it.
Light again, leaf again, life again, love again."
 Yes, my wild little Poet. 4

Sing the new year in under the blue
 Last year you sang it as gladly.
' New, new, new, new! " Is it then *so* new
 That you should carol so madly? 8

' Love again, song again, nest again, young
 again,"
 Never a prophet so crazy!
And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,
 See, there is hardly a daisy. 12

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

"Here again, here, here, here, happy year!"

O warble unhidden, unbidden!

Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,

And all the winters are hidden. 16

1889.

Lord Tennyson.

PHILOMELA

HARK! ah, the nightingale—

The tawny-throated!

Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!

What triumph! hark!—what pain! 4

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,

Still, after many years, in distant lands,

Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain

That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken, old-
world pain—

Say, will it never heal?

And can this fragrant lawn

With its cool trees, and night,

And the sweet, tranquil Thames,

And moonshine, and the dew,

To thy rack'd heart and brain

Afford no balm? 15

Dost thou to-night behold,

Here, through the moonlight on this

English grass,

Home-Thoughts, from Abroad

The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?
Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes
• The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's
shame?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make
resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?
Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding
through the leaves!
Again—thou hearest?
Eternal passion!
Eternal pain!

32

1853.

Matthew Arnold.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

Oh, to be in England
Now that April 's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood
sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

8

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's
edge—
That 's the wise thrush; he sings each song
twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary
dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-
flower!

20

1845.

Robert Browning

MY STAR

ALL that I know
Of a certain star
Is, it can throw
(Like the angled spar)
Now a dart of red.
Now a dart of blue;
Till my friends have said
They would fain see, too,
My star that dartles the red and the blue!

The World-Soul

Then it stops like a bird ; like a flower, hangs
furled : 10

They must solace themselves with the Saturn
above it.

What matter to me if their star is a world?

Mine has opened its soul to me ; therefore I
love it.

1855.

Robert Browning.

From Pippa Passes

The year 's at the spring
And day 's at the morn ;
Morning 's at seven ;
The hillside 's dew-pearled ;
The lark 's on the wing ;
The snail 's on the thorn :
God 's in his heaven—
All 's right with the world !

1841.

Robert Browning.

THE WORLD-SOUL

THANKS to the morning light,
Thanks to the seething sea,
To the uplands of New Hampshire,
To the green-haired forest free ;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Thanks to each man of courage,
To the maids of holy mind ;
To the boy with his games undaunted,
Who never looks behind.

Cities of proud hotels,
Houses of rich and great,
Vice nestles in your chambers,
Beneath your roofs of slate.
It cannot conquer folly,
Time-and-space-conquering steam,—
And the light-outspeeding telegraph
Bears nothing on its beam.

16

The politics are base,
The letters do not cheer,
And 't is far in the deeps of history—
The voice that speaketh clear.
Trade and the streets ensnare us,
Our bodies are weak and worn ;
We plot and corrupt each other,
And we despoil the unborn.

24

Yet there in the parlor sits
Some figure of noble guise,—
Our angel in a stranger's form,
Or woman's pleading eyes ;
Or only a flashing sunbeam
In at the window pane ;
Or music pours on mortals
Its beautiful disdain.

32

The World-Soul

The inevitable morning
Finds them who in cellars be,
And be sure the all-loving Nature
Will smile in a factory.
Yon ridge of purple landscape,
Yon sky between the walls,
Hold all the hidden wonders
In scanty intervals.

40

Alas! the sprite that haunts us
Deceives our rash desire;
It whispers of the glorious gods,
And leaves us in the mire:
We cannot learn the cipher
That 's writ upon our cell;
Stars help us by a mystery
Which we could never spell.

48

If but one hero knew it,
The world would blush in flame,
The sage, till he hit the secret,
Would hang his head for shame.
But our brothers have not read it,
Not one has found the key;
And henceforth we are comforted,—
We are but such as they.

56

Still, still the secret presses,
The nearing clouds draw down,
The crimson morning flames into
The fopperies of the town.

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Within, without, the idle earth
Stars weave eternal rings;
The sun himself shines heartily,
And shares the joy he brings. 64

And what if trade sow cities
Like shells along the shore,
And thatch with towns the prairie broad
With railways ironed o'er?—
They are but sailing foambells
Along Thought's causing stream,
And take their shape and Sun-color
From him that sends the dream 72

For destiny does not like
To yield to men the helm,
And shoots his thought by hidden nerves
Throughout the solid realm.
The patient Dæmon sits
With roses and a shroud,
He has his way, and deals his gifts—
But ours is not allowed. 80

He is no churl or trifler,
And his viceroy is none,
Love-without-weakness,
Of genius sire and son;
And his will is not thwarted,—
The seeds of land and sea
Are the atoms of his body bright,
And his behest obey 88

The World-Soul

He serveth the servant,
The brave he loves amain,
He kills the cripple and the sick,
And straight begins again;
For gods delight in gods,
And thrust the weak aside;
To him who scorns their charities,
Their arms fly open wide 96

When the old world is sterile,
And the ages are effete,
He will from wrecks and sediment
The fairer world complete.
He forbids to despair,
His cheeks mantle with mirth,
And the unimagined good of men
Is yearning at the birth 104

Spring still makes spring in the mind,
When sixty years are told;
Love wakes anew this throbbing heart,
And we are never old
Over the winter glaciers,
I see the summer glow,
And through the wild-piled snowdrift
The warm rose-buds below 112

1847

Ralph Waldo Emerson

TO THE HUMBLEBEE

BURLY, dozing humblebee!
Where thou art is clime for me;
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines;
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines. 10

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air,
Voyager of light and noon,
Epicurean of June!
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom. 19

When the south-wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall;
And, with softness touching all,

To the Humblebee

Tints the human countenance
With the color of romance ;
And infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,—
Thou in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow breezy bass. 31

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers ;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound,
In Indian wildernesses found ;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure. 39

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen ;
But violets, and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap, and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue,
And brier-roses, dwelt among
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.
Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff and take the wheat.
When the fierce north-western blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,—
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous. 63

1839.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

THE TITMOUSE

You shall not be overbold
When you deal with arctic cold,
As late I found my lukewarm blood
Chilled wading in the snow-choked wood.
How should I fight? my foeman fine
Has million arms to one of mine.
East, west, for aid I looked in vain,
East, west, north, south, are his domain.
Miles off, three dangerous miles, is home;
Must borrow his winds who there would come.
Up and away for life! be fleet!—
The frost-king ties my fumbling feet,
Sings in my ears, my hands are stones,
Curdles the blood to the marble bones,
Tugs at the heart-strings, numbs the sense,
And hems in life with narrowing fence.

The Titmouse

Well, in this broad bed lie and sleep,—
The punctual stars will vigil keep,—
Embalmed by purifying cold;
The winds shall sing their dead-march old,
The snow is no ignoble shroud,
The moon thy mourner, and the cloud.

22

Softly,—but this way fate was pointing,
'T was coming fast to such anointing,
When piped a tiny voice hard by,
Gay and polite, a cheerful cry,
Chic-chicadeedee' saucy note
Out of sound heart and merry throat.
As if it said, "Good day, good sir!
Fine afternoon, old passenger!
Happy to meet you in these places,
Where January brings few faces"

32

This poet, though he lived apart,
Moved by his hospitable heart,
Sped, when I passed his sylvan fort,
To do the honours of his court,
As fits a feathered lord of land;
Flew near, with soft wing grazed my hand,
Hopped on the bough, then, darting low,
Prints his small impress on the snow,
Shows feats of his gymnastic play,
Head downward, clinging to the spray

42

Here was this atom in full breath,
Hurling defiance at vast death;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

This scrap of valour just for play
Fronts the north-wind in waistcoat gray,
As if to shame my weak behaviour;
I greeted loud my little saviour,
“ You pet! what dost here? and what for?
In these woods, thy small Labrador,
At this pinch, wee San Salvador!
What fire burns in that little chest
So frolic, stout and self-possess? ”

53

“ Henceforth I wear no stripe but thine;
Ashes and jet all hues outshine.
Why are not diamonds black and gray,
To ape thy dare-devil array?
And I affirm, the spacious North
Exists to draw thy virtue forth.
I think no virtue goes with size;
The reason of all cowardice
Is, that men are overgrown,
And, to be valiant, must come down
To the titmouse dimension ”

64

’T is good-will makes intelligence,
And I began to catch the sense
Of my bird’s song: “ Live out of doors
In the great woods, on prairie floors.
I dune in the sun; when he sinks in the sea,
I too have a hole in a hollow tree;
And I like less when Summer beats
With stifling beams on these retreats,
Than noontide twilights which snow makes
With tempest of blinding flakes

The Titmouse

For well the soul, if stout within,
Can arm impregnably the skin;
And polar frost my frame defied,
Made of the air that blows outside." 78

With glad remembrance of my debt,
I homeward turn; farewell, my pet.
When here again thy pilgrim comes,
He shall bring store of seeds and crumbs.
Doubt not, so long as earth has bread,
Thou first and foremost shalt be fed;
The Providence that is most large
Takes hearts like thine in special charge,
Helps who for their own need are strong,
And the sky doats on cheerful song.
Henceforth I prize thy wiry chant
O'er all that mass and minster vaunt;
For men mis-hear thy call in Spring,
As 't would accost some frivolous wing,
Crying out of hazel copse, *Phe-be!*
And, in winter, *Chic-a-dee-dee!*
I think old Cæsar must have heard
In northern Gaul my dauntless bird,
And, echoed in some frosty wold,
Borrowed thy battle-numbers bold.
And I will write our annals new,
And thank thee for a better clew,
I, who dreamed not when I came here
To find the antidote of fear,
Now hear thee say in Roman key,
Pæan! Veni, vidi, vici. 104

1862.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

THE WHAUPS

Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and the
rain are flying—

Blows the wind on the moors to-day and now,
Where about the graves of martyrs the whaups
are crying,

My heart remembers how! 4

Gray, recumbent tombs of the dead in desert
places,

Standing stones on the vacant, red-wine moor,
Hills of sheep, and the homes of the silent
vanished races,

And winds, austere and pure! 8

Be it granted me to behold you again in dying,
Hills of home! and I hear again the call—
Hear about the graves of the martyrs the pee-
wees crying,

And hear no more at all. 12

1895.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

THE SANDPIPER

ACROSS the narrow beach we flit,

One little sandpiper and I;

And fast I gather, bit by bit,

The scattered driftwood bleached and dry.

The Sandpiper

The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,—
One little sandpiper and I

8

Above our heads the sullen clouds
Scud black and swift across the sky:
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
Stand out the white light-houses high.
Almost as far as eye can reach
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach,—
One little sandpiper and I.

16

I watch him as he skims along,
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry.
He starts not at my fitful song,
Or flash of fluttering drapery;
He has no thought of any wrong;
He scans me with a fearless eye.
Stanch friends are we, well tried and strong,
The little sandpiper and I.

24

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!
To what warm shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky:
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?

32

1872.

Celia Thaxter.

THE SEA

THE sea! the sea! the open sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions 'round;
It plays with the clouds; it mocks the skies;
Or like a cradled creature lies. 6

I'm on the sea! I'm on the sea!
I am where I would ever be;
With the blue above, and the blue below,
And silence wheresoe'er I go;
If a storm should come and awake the deep,
What matter? I shall ride and sleep. 12

I love (Oh! *how* I love) to ride
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,
When every mad wave drowns the moon,
Or whistles aloft his tempest tune,
And tells how goeth the world below,
And why the south-west blasts do blow. 18

I never was on the dull, tame shore,
But I loved the great sea more and more,
And backwards flew to her billowy breast,
Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest;

A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea

And a mother she *was*, and *is*, to me;
For I was born on the open sea! 24

The waves were white, and red the morn,
In the noisy hour when I was born;
And the whale it whistled, the porpoise rolled,
And the dolphins bared their backs of gold;
And never was heard such an outcry wild
As welcomed to life the ocean-child! 30

I've lived since then, in calm and strife,
Full fifty summers, a sailor's life,
With wealth to spend and a power to range,
But never have sought nor sighed for change;
And Death, whenever he come to me,
Shall come on the wild, unbounded sea! 36

1832.

Bryan Waller Procter.

A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA

A WET sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee. 8

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

"O for a soft and gentle wind!"

I hear a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

16

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashing free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

24

1822.

Allan Cunningham

THE BLOOD HORSE

GAMARRA is a noble steed,
Strong, black, and of a noble breed,
Full of fire, and full of bone,
With all his line of fathers known;
Fine his nose, his nostrils thin,
But blown abroad by the pride within!
His mane, a stormy river flowing,
And his eyes like embers glowing
In the darkness of the night,
And his pace as swift as light.

10

The Blood Horse

Look,—around his straining throat
Grace and shifting beauty float;
Smewy strength is in his reins,
And the red blood gallops through his
veins:

Richer, redder, never ran
Through the boasting heart of man.
He can trace his lineage higher
Than the Bourbon dare aspire,—
Douglas, Guzman, or the Guelph,
Or O'Brien's blood itself!

20

He, who hath no peer, was born
Here, upon a red March morn:
But his famous fathers dead
Were Arabs all, and Arab bred;
And the last of that great line
Trod like one of a race divine!
And yet,—he was but friend to one
Who fed him at the set of sun
By some lone fountain fringed with green;
With him, a roving Bedouin,
He lived (none else would he obey
Through all the hot Arabian day),
And died untamed upon the sands
Where Balkh amidst the desert stands. 34

1832.

Bryan Walter Procter.

LOVE SONGS

A PRAISE OF HIS LADY

GIVE place, you ladies, and begone!
Boast not yourselves at all!
For here at hand approacheth one
Whose face will stain you all. 4

The virtue of her lively looks
Excels the precious stone,
I wish to have none other books
To read or look upon. 8

In each of her two crystal eyes
Smileth a naked boy;
It would you all in heart suffice
To see that lamp of joy 12

I think Nature hath lost the mould
Where she her shape did take;
Or else I doubt if Nature could
So fair a creature make 16

She may be well compared
Unto the Phoenix kind,
Whose like was never seen or heard,
That any man can find. 20

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

In life she is Diana chaste,
In troth Penelopey;
In word and eke in deed steadfast,
—What will you more we say? 24

If all the world were sought so far,
Who could find such a wight?
Her beauty twinkleth like a star
Within the frosty night 28

Her roseal colour comes and goes
With such a comely grace,
More ruddier, too, than doth the rose,
Within her lively face. 32

At Bacchus' feast none shall her meet,
Ne at no wanton play,
Nor gazing in an open street,
Nor gadding as a stray. 36

The modest mirth that she doth use
Is mix'd with shamefastness;
All vice she doth wholly refuse,
And hateth idleness. 40

O Lord! it is a world to see
How virtue can repair,
And deck in her such honesty,
Whom Nature made so fair. 44

Truly she doth as far exceed
Our women nowadays,

“ And Wilt Thou Leave Me Thus ”

As doth the jeliflower a weed ;
And more a thousand ways. 48

How might I do to get a graff
Of this unspotted tree?
—For all the rest are plain but chaff,
Which seem good corn to be. 52

This gift alone I shall her give ;
When death doth what he can,
Her honest fame shall ever live
Within the mouth of man. 56

1557.

John Heywood.

‘ AND WILT THOU LEAVE ME
THUS ’

AND wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay! for shame!
To save thee from the blame
Of all my grief and grame.
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay! 6

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath loved thee so long,
In wealth and woe among?
And is thy heart so strong
As for to leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay! 12

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And wilt thou leave me thus,
That hath given thee my heart,
Never for to depart,
Neither for pain nor smart?
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

18

And wilt thou leave me thus,
And have no more pity
Of him that loveth thee?
Alas! thy cruelty!
And wilt thou leave me thus?
Say nay! say nay!

24

c. 1542. 1816.

Sir Thomas Wyatt.

FORGET NOT YET

FORGET not yet the tried intent
Of such a troth as I have meant;
My great travail so gladly spent,
Forget not yet!

4

Forget not yet when first began
The weary life ye know, since whan
The suit, the service, none tell can;
Forget not yet!

8

Forget not yet the great assays,
The cruel wrong, the scornful ways,
The painful patience in delays,
Forget not yet!

12

Rosalind's Madrigal

Forget not! O, forget not this!—
How long ago hath been, and is,
The mind that never meant amiss—
Forget not yet! 16

Forget not then thine own approved,
The which so long hath thee so loved,
Whose steadfast faith yet never moved:
Forget not this! 20

c. 1542 1816.

Sir Thomas W'yatt

ROSALIND'S MADRIGAL

From Rosalynde

LOVE in my bosom like a bee
Doth suck his sweet:
Now with his wings he plays with me,
Now with his feet.
Within mine eyes he makes his nest,
His bed amidst my tender breast;
My kisses are his daily feast.
And yet he robs me of my rest:
Ah! wanton, will ye? 9

And if I sleep, then percheth he
With pretty flight,
And makes his pillow of my knee
The livelong night.
Strike I my lute, he tunes the string;
He music plays if so I sing;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

He lends me every lovely thing,
Yet cruel he my heart doth sting :
Whist, wanton, still ye ! 18

Else I with roses every day
Will whip you hence ;
And bind you, when you long to play,
For your offence.
I'll shut mine eyes to keep you in ;
I'll make you fast it for your sin ;
I'll count your power not worth a pin.
—Alas ! what hereby shall I win,
If he gainsay me ? 27

What if I beat the wanton boy
With many a rod ?
He will repay me with annoy,
Because a god.
Then sit thou safely on my knee ;
Then let thy bower my bosom be ;
Lurk in mine eyes, I like of thee ;
O Cupid, so thou pity me.
Spare not, but play thee ! 36

1590.

Thomas Lodge.

ROSALIND'S DESCRIPTION

From Rosalynde

LIKE to the clear in highest sphere
Where all imperial glory shines,
Of selfsame colour is her hair
Whether unfolded, or in twines :
Heigh ho, fair Rosaline !

Rosalind's Description

Her eyes are sapphires set in snow,
Refining heaven by every wink;
The Gods do fear whenas they glow,
And I do tremble when I think.

Heigh ho, would she were mine! 10

Her cheeks are like the blushing cloud
That beautifies Aurora's face,
Or like the silver crimson shroud
That Phœbus' smiling looks doth grace;

Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!

Her lips are like two budded roses
Whom ranks of lilies neighbour nigh,
Within which bounds she balm encloses,
Apt to entice a deity:

Heigh ho, would she were mine! 20

Her neck is like a stately tower
Where Love himself imprison'd lies,
To watch for glances every hour
From her divine and sacred eyes:

Heigh ho, for Rosaline!

Her paps are centres of delight,
Her paps are orbs of heavenly frame,
Where Nature moulds the dew of light
To feed perfection with the same:

Heigh ho, would she were mine! 30

With orient pearl, with ruby red,
With marble white, with sapphire blue
Her body every way is fed;
Yet soft in touch and sweet in view:

Heigh ho, fair Rosaline!

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Nature herself her shape admires;
The Gods are wounded in her sight;
And Love forsakes his heavenly fires
And at her eyes his brand doth light:

Heigh ho, would she were mine! 40

Then muse not, Nymphs, though I bemoan
The absence of fair Rosaline,
Since for her fair there 's fairer none,
Nor for her virtues so divine:

Heigh ho, fair Rosaline;

Heigh ho, my heart! would God that she were
mine! 46

1590.

Thomas Lodge.

CUPID AND CAMPASPE

From Campaspe

CUPID and my Campaspe played
At cards for kisses,—Cupid paid;
He stakes his quiver, bow and arrows,
His mother's doves, and team of sparrows,—
Loses them too; then down he throws
The coral of his lip, the rose
Growing on 's cheek (but none knows how);
With these the crystal of his brow,
And then the dimple of his chin,—
All these did my Campaspe win.
At last he set her both his eyes;
She won, and Cupid blind did rise.
O Love! has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas! become of me? 14

1584.

John Lyly.

THE BARGAIN

From Arcadia, 3d ed.

My true love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for another given :
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a better bargain driven.
My true love hath my heart, and I have his. 5

His heart in me keeps me and him in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides :
He loves my heart, for once it was his own ;
I cherish his because in me it bides :
My true love hath my heart, and I have his. 10

His heart his wound received from my sight ;
My heart was wounded with his wounded
heart :
For as from me on him his hurt did light,
So still methought in me his hurt did smart.
Both equal hurt, in this change sought our
bliss :
My true love hath my heart, and I have
his. 16

1598.

Sir Philip Sidney.

BEAUTY SAT BATHING

BEAUTY sat bathing by a spring,
Where fairest shades did hide her;
The winds blew calm, the birds did sing,
The cool streams ran beside her.
My wanton thoughts enticed mine eye
To see what was forbidden:
But better memory said Fie;
So vain desire was chidden—
Hey nonny nonny O!
Hey nonny nonny! 10

Into a slumber then I fell,
And fond imagination
Seemèd to see, but could not tell,
Her feature or her fashion:
But ev'n as babes in dreams do smile,
And sometimes fall a-weeping,
So I awaked as wise that while
As when I fell a-sleeping. 18

HER TRIUMPH

In part from *The Devil is an Ass*

SEE the Chariot at hand here of Love,
Wherein my Lady rideth!
Each that draws is a swan or a dove,
And well the car Love guideth.
As she goes, all hearts do duty
Unto her beauty;
And enamour'd do wish, so they might
But enjoy such a sight,
That they still were to run by her side,
Through swords, through seas, whither she
would ride.

10

Do but look on her eyes, they do light
All that Love's world compriseth!
Do but look on her hair, it is bright
As Love's star when it riseth!
Do but mark, her forehead 's smother
Than words that soothe her;
And from her arch'd brows such a grace
Sheds itself through the face,
As alone there triumphs to the life
All the gain, all the good, of the elements'
strife.

20

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Have you seen but a bright lily grow
Before rude hands have touch'd it?
Have you mark'd but the fall o' the snow
Before the soil hath smutch'd it?
Have you felt the wool of beaver,
Or swan's down ever?
Or have smelt o' the bud o' the brier,
Or the nard in the fire?
Or have tasted the bag of the bee?
O so white, O so soft, O so sweet is she! 30

1631

Ben Jonson

TO CELIA

DRINK to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine;
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I 'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
I would not change for thine. 8

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
Not so much honouring thee,
As giving it a hope that there
It could not wither'd be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe,
And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
Not of itself but thee! 16

1616.

Ben Jonson.

SIMPLEX MUNDITIIS

From Epicæne

STILL to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast,
Still to be powder'd, still perfumed:
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound. 6

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
Than all th' adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart. 12

1609?

Ben Jonson

SILVIA

From Two Gentlemen of Verona

Who is Silvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admirèd be. 5

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness:
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness;
And, being help'd, inhabits there. 10

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling:
To her let us garlands bring. 15

1623.

William Shakespearc.

“O MISTRESS MINE, WHERE ARE YOU ROAMING?”

From Twelfth Night

O MISTRESS mine, where are you roaming?
O stay and hear! your true-love's coming
That can sing both high and low;
Trip no further, pretty sweeting,
Journeys end in lovers meeting—
Every wise man's son doth know. 6

What is love? 't is not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What 's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty,—
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth 's a stuff will not endure. 12

1623.

William Shakespeare.

“TAKE, O TAKE THOSE LIPS AWAY ”

From Measure for Measure

TAKE, O take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn!
But my kisses bring again,
Bring again;
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain,
Seal'd in vain!

1623.

William Shakespeare.

LOVE

From Merchant of Venice

TELL me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head?
How begot, how nourishèd?
Reply, reply.

4

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed ; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy's knell :
I 'll begin it,—ding, dong, bell
Ding, dong, bell.

16

1600.

William Shakespeare.

CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH

CRABBED Age and Youth
Cannot live together :
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care ,
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather ;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare .
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short ;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame :
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold ;
Youth is wild, and Age is tame :—
Age, I do abhor thee,
Youth, I do adore thee ;
O ! my Love, my Love is young !
Age, I do defy thee—
O sweet shepherd, hie thee,
For methinks thou stay'st too long

18

20

1599.

William Shakespeare ()*

“ON A DAY, ALACK THE DAY!”

From *L. L. L.*

ON a day, alack the day!
Love, whose month is ever May,
Spied a blossom passing fair
Playing in the wanton air:
Through the velvet leaves the wind
All unseen 'gan passage find;
That the lover, sick to death,
Wish'd himself the heaven's breath.
Air, quoth he, thy cheeks may blow;
Air, would I might triumph so! 10
But, alack, my hand is sworn
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn:
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet,
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet!
Do not call it sin in me
That I am forsworn for thee:
Thou for whom e'en Jove would swear
Juno but an Ethiope were,
And deny himself for Jove.
Turning mortal for thy love. 20

1598.

William Shakespeare

“COME AWAY, COME AWAY,
DEATH ”

From Twelfth Night

COME away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it 8

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corpse, where my bones shall
be thrown:
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there! 16

1623.

William Shakespeare.

HARK, HARK! THE LARK

From Cymbeline

HARK, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes;
With everything that pretty bin,
My lady sweet, arise;
Arise, arise!

1623.

William Shakespeare.

I

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD TO HIS LOVE

COME live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
Woods or steepy mountain yields.

4

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And we will sit upon the rocks,
And see the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals. 8

And I will make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies ;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle. 12

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull ;
Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold ; 16

A belt of straw and ivy-buds
With coral clasps and amber studs :
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love. 20

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning :
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love. 24

1599-1600.

Christopher Marlowe.

II

HER REPLY

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy Love.

My Lady's Tears

But Time drives flocks from field to fold,
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold,
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complains of cares to come 8

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward Winter reckoning yields.
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall. 12

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies,
Soon break, soon wither—soon forgotten,
In folly ripe, in reason rotten 16

Thy belt of straw and ivy-buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,—
All those in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy Love 20

But could youth last, and love still breed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy Love 24

1599-1600.

Sir Walter Raleigh

MY LADY'S TEARS

From John Dowland's Second Book of Songs or Ayres

I SAW my Lady weep,
And Sorrow proud to be advancèd so
In those fair eyes where all perfections keep.
Her face was full of woe;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

But such a woe (believe me) as wins more hearts
Than Mirth can do with her enticing parts. 6

Sorrow was there made fair,
And Passion wise; Tears a delightful thing;
Silence beyond all speech, a wisdom rare:
She made her sighs to sing,
And all things with so sweet a sadness move
As made my heart at once both grieve and love. 12

O fairer than aught else
The world can show, leave off in time to grieve!
Enough, enough: your joyful look excels:
Tears kill the heart, believe.
O strive not to be excellent in woe,
Which only breeds your beauty's overthrow! 18

1600.

Anonymous.

WEEP YOU NO MORE, SAD FOUNTAINS

*From John Dowland's Third and Last Book of
Songs or Aires*

WEEP you no more, sad fountains;
What need you flow so fast?
Look how the snowy mountains
Heaven's sun doth gently waste!
But my sun's heavenly eyes
View not your weeping,
That now lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

9

Wooing Song

Sleep is a reconciling,
A rest that peace begets ;
Doth not the sun rise smiling,
When fair at even he sets ?
Rest you then, rest, sad eyes !
Melt not in weeping,
While she lies sleeping
Softly, now softly lies
Sleeping.

18

1603.

Anonymous.

WOOING SONG

Love is the blossom where there blows
Every thing that lives or grows :
Love doth make the Heav'ns to move,
And the Sun doth burn in love :
Love the strong and weak doth yoke,
And makes the ivy climb the oak,
Under whose shadows lions wild,
Softened by love, grow tame and mild :
Love no medicine can appease,
He burns the fishes in the seas :
Not all the skill his wounds can stench,
Not all the sea his fire can quench.
Love did make the bloody spear
Once a leavy coat to wear,
While in his leaves there shrouded lay
Sweet birds, for love that sing and play :

10

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And of all love's joyful flame

I the bud and blossom am.

Only bend thy knee to me,

Thy wooing shall thy winning be!

20

See, see the flowers that below

Now as fresh as morning blow ;

And of all the virgin rose

That as bright Aurora shows ;

How they all unleavèd die,

Losing their virginity!

Like unto a summer shade,

But now born, and now they fade.

Every thing doth pass away ,

There is danger in delay .

30

Come, come, gather then the rose,

Gather it, or it you lose!

All the sand of 'Tagus' shore

Into my bosom casts his ore :

All the valleys' swimming corn

To my house is yearly borne :

Every grape of every vine

Is gladly bruised to make me wine :

While ten thousand kings, as proud,

To carry up my train have bow'd,

And a world of ladies send me

In my chambers to attend me :

All the stars in Heav'n that shine,

And ten thousand more, are mine.

Only bend thy knee to me,

Thy wooing shall thy winning be!

46

1610.

Giles Fletcher.

CHERRY-RIPE

THERE is a garden in her face
Where roses and white lilies grow ;
A heavenly paradise is that place,
Wherein all pleasant fruits do flow ;
There cherries grow that none may buy,
Till Cherry-Ripe themselves do cry. 6

Those cherries fairly do enclose
Of orient pearl a double row ;
Which when her lovely laughter shows,
They look like rose-buds fill'd with snow :
Yet them no peer nor prince may buy,
Till Cherry-Ripe themselves do cry 12

Her eyes like angels watch them still ;
Her brows like bended bows do stand,
Threat'ning with piercing frowns to kill
All that attempt with eye or hand
Those sacred cherries to come nigh,
—Till Cherry-Ripe themselves do cry ! 18

1606.

Thomas Campion.

FOLLOW YOUR SAINT

FOLLOW your saint, follow with accents sweet !
Haste you, sad notes, fall at her flying feet !

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

There, wrapt in cloud of sorrow, pity move,
And tell the ravisher of my soul I perish for her
love:

But if she scorns my never-ceasing pain,
Then burst with sighing in her sight, and ne'er
return again! 6

All that I sung still to her praise did tend;
Still she was first, still she my songs did end;
Yet she my love and music both doth fly,
The music that her echo is and beauty's sym-
pathy:

Then let my notes pursue her scornful flight!
It shall suffice that they were breathed and died
for her delight. 12

1601.

Thomas Campion.

MADRIGAL

From Davison's Poetical Rhapsody

MY Love in her attire doth show her wit,
It doth so well become her;
For every season she hath dressings fit,
For Winter, Spring, and Summer.
No beauty she doth miss
When all her robes are on:
But Beauty's self she is
When all her robes are gone.

1602.

Anonymous

VOBISCUM EST IOPE

WHEN thou must home to shades of underground,
And there arrived, a new admirèd guest,
The beauteous spirits do engirt thee round,
White Iope, blithe Helen, and the rest,
To hear the stories of thy finish'd love
From that smooth tongue whose music hell can
move ; 6

Then wilt thou speak of banqueting delights,
Of masques and revels which sweet youth did
make,
Of tourneys and great challenges of knights,
And all these triumphs for thy beauty's sake :
When thou hast told these honours done to thee,
Then tell, O tell, how thou didst murder me ! 12

1601.

Thomas Campion.

LOVE NOT ME FOR COMELY GRACE

Love me not for comely grace,
For my pleasing eye or face,
Nor for any outward part :
No, nor for a constant heart ;
For those may fail or turn to ill,
So thou and I shall sever.

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Keep therefore a true woman's eye,
And love me still, but know not why!
So hast thou the same reason still
To dote upon me ever.

10

1609.

Anonymous.

PHILLIDA AND CORYDON

IN the merry month of May,
In a morn by break of day,
Forth I walk'd by the wood-side
Whereas May was in her pride:
There I spièd all alone
Phillida and Corydon
Much ado there was, God wot!
He would love and she would not.
She said, never man was true;
He said, none was false to you. 10
He said, he had loved her long;
She said, Love should have no wrong.
Corydon would kiss her then;
She said, maids must kiss no men
Till they did for good and all;
Then she made the shepherd call
All the heavens to witness truth
Never loved a truer youth.
Thus with many a pretty oath,
Yea and nay, and faith and troth, 20
Such as seely shepherds use
When they will not Love abuse,

Pack, Clouds, Away

Love, which had been long deluded,
Was with kisses sweet concluded;
And Phillida, with garlands gay,
Was made the Lady of the May.

1591

Nicholas Breton.

PACK, CLOUDS, AWAY

From The Rape of Lucrece

PACK, clouds, away, and welcome day,
With night we banish sorrow;
Sweet air, blow soft, mount, lark, aloft
To give my Love good-morrow!
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
Notes from the lark I'll borrow;
Bird, prune thy wing, nightingale, sing,
To give my Love good-morrow;
To give my Love good-morrow,
Notes from them both I'll borrow. 1

Wake from thy nest, Robin-red-breast,
Sing, birds, in every furrow;
And from each bill, let music shrill
Give my fair Love good-morrow!
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow!
You pretty elves, amongst yourselves
Sing my fair Love good-morrow;
To give my Love good-morrow,
Sing, birds, in every furrow! 2

1608.

Thomas Heywood.

LOVE IS A SICKNESS

From Hymen's Triumph

Love is a sickness full of woes,
All remedies refusing;
A plant that most with cutting grows,
Most barren with best using.

Why so?

More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries
Heigh-ho!

8

Love is a torment of the mind,
A tempest everlasting;
And Jove hath made it of a kind,
Not well, nor full, nor fasting.

Why so?

More we enjoy it, more it dies;
If not enjoyed, it sighing cries
Heigh-ho!

16

1615.

Samuel Daniel.

TO MISTRESS MARGARET HUSSEY

MERRY Margaret,
As midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower;

To Mistress Margaret Hussey

With solace and gladness,
Much mirth and no madness,
All good and no badness ;
So joyously,
So maidenly,
So womanly 1c
Her demeaning,
In everything
Far, far passing
That I can indite,
Or suffice to write
Of merry Margaret,
As midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon
Or hawk of the tower ;
As patient and as still, 20
And as full of good-will,
As fair Isiphil,
Coliander,
Sweet Pomander,
Good Cassander ;
Stedfast of thought,
Well made, well wrought ;
Far may be sought,
Ere you can find
So courteous, so kind, 30
As merry Margaret,
This midsummer flower,
Gentle as falcon,
Or hawk of the tower.

THE AUTHOR'S RESOLUTION

SHALL I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flow'ry meads in May,
If she think not well of me,
What care I how fair she be? 8

Shall my silly heart be pined
'Cause I see a woman kind?
Or a well disposèd nature
Joinèd with a lovely feature?
Be she meeker, kinder, than
Turtle-dove or pelican,
If she be not so to me,
What care I how kind she be? 16

Shall a woman's virtues move
Me to perish for her love?
Or her well-deservings known
Make me quite forget my own?
Be she with that goodness blest
Which may merit name of Best,
If she be not such to me,
What care I how good she be? 24

A Welcome

'Cause her fortune seems too high,
Shall I play the fool and die?
She that bears a noble mind,
If not outward helps she find,
Thinks what with them he would do
That without them dares her woo;
And unless that mind I see,
What care I how great she be? 32

Great, or good, or kind, or fair,
I will ne'er the more despair;
If she love me, this believe,
I will die ere she shall grieve;
If she slight me when I woo,
I can scorn and let her go;
For if she be not for me,
What care I for whom she be? 40

1617

George Wither.

A WELCOME

*Welcome, welcome' do I sing,
Far more welcome than the spring;
He that parteth from you never
Shall enjoy a spring for ever 4*

He that to the voice is near
Breaking from your iv'ry pale,
Need not walk abroad to hear
The delightful nightingale 8

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

He that looks still on your eyes,
Though the winter have begun
To benumb our arteries,
Shall not want the summer's sun. 12

He that still may see your cheeks,
Where all rareness still reposes,
Is a fool if e'er he seeks
Other lilies, other roses. 16

He to whom your soft lip yields,
And perceives your breath in kissing,
All the odours of the fields
Never, never shall be missing. 20

He that question would anew
What fair Eden was of old,
Let him rightly study you,
And a brief of that behold. 24

1616? 1815. *William Browne, of Tavistock.*

MY CHOICE

SHALL I tell you whom I love?
Hearken then awhile to me;
And if such a woman move
As I now shall versify,
Be assured 't is she or none,
That I love, and love alone. 6

My Choice

Nature did her so much right
As she scorns the help of art.
In as many virtues dight
As e'er yet embraced a heart.
So much good so truly tried,
Some for less were deified. 12

Wit she hath, without desire
To make known how much she hath;
And her anger flames no higher
Than may fitly sweeten wrath.
Full of pity as may be,
Though perhaps not so to me. 18

Reason masters every sense,
And her virtues grace her birth;
Lovely as all excellence,
Modest in her most of mirth.
Likelihood enough to prove
Only worth could kindle love. 24

Such she is; and if you know
Such a one as I have sung;
Be she brown, or fair, or so (,
That she be but somewhat young;
Be assured 't is she, or none,
That I love, and love alone. 30

1616.

William Browne, of Tavistock.

OVER THE MOUNTAINS

OVER the mountains
And over the waves,
Under the fountains
And under the graves ;
Under floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way. 8

When there is no place
For the glow-worm to lie,
Where there is no space
For receipt of a fly ;
When the midge dares not venture
Lest herself fast she lay ;
If Love come, he will enter
And will find out the way. 16

You may esteem him
A child for his might ;
Or you may deem him
A coward from his flight ;
But if she whom Love doth honour
Be conceal'd from the day—
Set a thousand guards upon her,
Love will find out the way. 24

Over the Mountains

Some think to lose him
By having him confined;
And some do suppose him,
Poor thing! to be blind;
But if ne'er so close ye wall him,
Do the best that ye may,
Blind Love, if so ye call him,
He will find out his way. 32

You may train the eagle
To stoop to your fist;
Or you may inveigle
The Phoenix of the east;
The lioness, you may move her
To give over her prey;
But you'll ne'er stop a lover—
He will find out his way. 40

.
If the earth it should part him,
He would gallop it o'er,
If the seas should o'erthwart him,
He would swim to the shore;
Should his Love become a swallow,
Through the air to stray,
Love will lend wings to follow,
And will find out the way 48

There is no striving
To cross his intent;
There is no contriving
His plots to prevent;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

But if once the message greet him
That his True Love doth stay,
If Death should come and meet him,
Love will find out the way! 56

Early 17th Cent

Anonymous.

TO ROSES IN THE BOSOM OF CASTARA

YE blushing virgins happy are
In the chaste nunnery of her breasts—
For he'd profane so chaste a fair,
Whoc'er should call them Cupid's nests. 4

Transplanted thus how bright ye grow!
How rich a perfume do ye yield!
In some close garden cowslips so
Are sweeter than i' th' open field. 8

In those white cloisters live secure
From the rude blasts of wanton breath!—
Each hour more innocent and pure,
Till you shall wither into death. 12

Then that which living gave you room,
Your glorious sepulchre shall be.
There wants no marble for a tomb
Whose breast hath marble been to me. 16

1634.

William Habington.

WISHES TO HIS SUPPOSED MISTRESS

WHO'E'R she be—
That not impossible She
That shall command my heart and me: 3

Where'er she lie,
Lock'd up from mortal eye
In shady leaves of destiny: 6

Till that ripe birth
Of studied Fate stand forth,
And teach her fair steps to our earth: 9

Till that divine
Idea take a shrine
Of crystal flesh, through which to shine: 12

Meet you her, my Wishes,
Bespeak her to my blisses,
And be ye call'd my absent kisses. 15

I wish her Beauty,
That owes not all its duty
To gaudy tire, or glist'ring shoe-tie: 18

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Something more than
Taffata or tissue can,
Or rampant feather, or rich fan. 21

A Face, that 's best
By its own beauty drest,
And can alone commend the rest. 24

A Face, made up
Out of no other shop
Than what Nature's white hand sets opc. 27

A Cheek, where youth
And blood, with pen of truth,
Write what the reader sweetly ru'th. 30

A Cheek, where grows
More than a morning rose,
Which to no box his being owes. 33

Lips, where all day
A lover's kiss may play,
Yet carry nothing thence away. 36

Looks, that oppress
Their richest tires, but dress
And clothe their simplest nakedness. 39

Eyes, that displaces
The neighbour diamond, and outfaces
That sunshine by their own sweet graces. 42

Wishes to His Supposed Mistress

Tresses, that wear
Jewels but to declare
How much themselves more precious are : 45

Whose native ray
Can tame the wanton day
Of gems that in their bright shades play. 48

Each ruby there,
Or pearl that dare appear,
Be its own blush, be its own tear. 51

A well-tamed Heart,
For whose more noble smart
Love may be long choosing a dart. 54

Eyes, that bestow
Full quivers on love's bow,
Yet pay less arrows than they owe. 57

Smiles, that can warm
The blood, yet teach a charm,
That chastity shall take no harm. 60

Blushes, that bin
The burnish of no sin,
Nor flames of aught too hot within. 63

Joys, that confess
Virtue their mistress,
And have no other head to dress. 66

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Fears, fond and slight
As the coy bride's, when night
First does the longing lover right. 69

Days, that need borrow
No part of their good-morrow
From a fore-spent night of sorrow. 72

Days, that in spite
Of darkness, by the light
Of a clear mind, are day all night 75

Nights, sweet as they,
Made short by lovers' play,
Yet long by th' absence of the day 78

Life, that dares send
A challenge to his end,
And when it comes, say, " Welcome,
friend ! " 81

Sydnæan showers
Of sweet discourse, whose powers
Can crown old Winter's head with
flowers 84

Soft silken hours,
Open suns, shady bowers ;
'Bove all, nothing within that lowers 87

Whate'er delight
Can make Day's forehead bright,
Or give down to the wings of Night 90

Wishes to His Supposed Mistress

I wish her store
Of worth may leave her poor
Of wishes; and I wish—no more. 93

Now, if Time knows
That her, whose radiant brows
Weave them a garland of my vows; 96

Her, whose just bays
My future hopes can raise,
A trophy to her present praise; 99

Her, that dares be
What these lines wish to see;
I seek no further, it is She. 102

'T is she, and here,
Lo! I unclothe and clear
My wishes' cloudy character. 105

May she enjoy it
Whose merit dare apply it,
But modesty dares still deny it! 108

Such worth as this is
Shall fix my flying Wishes,
And determine them to kisses. 111

Let her full glory,
My fancies, fly before ye;
Be ye my fictions—but her story. 114

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO A LOVER

WHY so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prythee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prythee, why so pale? 5

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prythee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do 't?
Prythee, why so mute? 10

Quit, quit, for shame! this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The D—l take her! 15

1638.

Sir John Suckling.

CONSTANCY

OUT upon it, I have loved
Three whole days together!
And am like to love three more,
If it prove fair weather. 4

To Dianeme

Time shall moult away his wings
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again
Such a constant lover. 8

But the spite on 't is, no praise
Is due at all to me:
Love with me had made no stays,
Had it any been but she. 12

Had it any been but she,
And that very face,
There had been at least ere this
A dozen dozen in her place 16

1638.

Sir John Suckling.

TO DIANEME

SWEET, be not proud of those two eyes
Which starlike sparkle in their skies;
Nor be you proud that you can see
All hearts your captives, yours yet free;
Be you not proud of that rich hair
Which wantons with the love-sick air;
Whenas that ruby which you wear,
Sunk from the tip of your soft ear,
Will last to be a precious stone
When all your world of beauty 's gone. 10

1648.

Robert Herrick.

UPON JULIA'S CLOTHES

WHENAS in silks my Julia goes,
Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
The liquefaction of her clothes !

Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
That brave vibration each way free,
—O how that glittering taketh me !

1648.

Robert Herrick.

THE PRIMROSE

Ask me why I send you here
This sweet Infanta of the year?
Ask me why I send to you
This primrose, thus bepearl'd with dew?
I will whisper to your ears:—
The sweets of love are mix'd with tears 6

Ask me why this flower does show
So yellow-green, and sickly too?
Ask me why the stalk is weak
And bending (yet it doth not break)?
I will answer:—These discover
What fainting hopes are in a lover. 12

1648.

Robert Herrick.

TO THE VIRGINS, TO MAKE MUCH OF TIME

GATHER ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a flying ;
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying. 4

The glorious lamp of Heaven, the sun,
The higher he 's a getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he 's to setting 8

The age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer ;
But being spent, the worse and worst
Times still succeed the former. 12

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And, while ye may, go marry ;
For having lost but once your prime,
You may forever tarry. 16

1648.

Robert Herrick.

DELIGHT IN DISORDER

A SWEET disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness ;
A lawn about the shoulders thrown
Into a fine distraction ;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

An erring lace, which here and there
Inthralls the crimson stomacher ;
A cuff neglectful, and thereby
Ribbons to flow confusedly ;
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat ; 10
A careless shoestring, in whose tie
I see a wild civility ;—
Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

1648.

Robert Herrick.

TO ANTHERA ; WHO MAY COMMAND HIM ANYTHING

Bid me to live, and I will live
Thy Protestant to be ;
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee. 4

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart I'll give to thee. 8

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay
To honour thy decree :
Or bid it languish quite away,
And 't shall do so for thee. 12

To Daisies, Not to Shut so Soon

Bid me to weep, and I will weep
While I have eyes to see :
And, having none, yet will I keep
A heart to weep for thee. 16

Bid me despair, and I'll despair
Under that cypress-tree ·
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death to die for thee. 20

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me .
And hast command of every part
To live and die for thee 24

1648.

Robert Herrick

TO DAISIES, NOT TO SHUT SO SOON

SHUT not so soon ; the dull-eyed night
Has not as yet begun
To make a seizure on the light,
Or to seal up the sun 4

No marigolds yet closed are,
No shadows great appear ;
Nor doth the early shepherd's star
Shine like a spangle here. 8

Stay but till my Julia close
Her life-begetting eye,
And let the whole world then dispose
Itself to live or die. 12

1648.

Robert Herrick.

THE NIGHT-PIECE, TO JULIA

HER eyes the glow-worm lend thee,
The shooting stars attend thee ;
 And the elves also,
 Whose little eyes glow
Like sparks of fire, befriend thee. 5

No Will-o'-the-wisp mislight thee,
Nor snake or slow-worm bite thee ;
 But on, on thy way
 Not making a stay,
Since ghost there 's none to affright thee. 10

Let not the dark thee cumber ·
What though the moon does slumber?
 The stars of the night
 Will lend thee their light
Like tapers clear without number. 15

Then, Julia, let me woo thee,
Thus, thus to come unto me ;
 And when I shall meet
 Thy silv'ry feet,
My soul I'll pour into thee. 20

1648.

Robert Herrick.

TO LUCASTA, GOING BEYOND
THE SEAS

If to be absent were to be
 Away from thee ;
 Or that when I am gone
 You or I were alone ;
Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
Pity from blustering wind or swallowing wave 6

But I'll not sigh one blast or gale
 To swell my sail,
 Or pay a tear to 'suage
 The foaming blue god's rage ;
For whether he will let me pass
Or no, I'm still as happy as I was. 12

Though seas and land betwixt us both,
 Our faith and troth,
 Like separated souls,
 All time and space controls :
Above the highest sphere we meet,
Unseen, unknown ; and greet as Angels greet 18

So then we do anticipate
 Our after-fate,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And are alive i' the skies,
If thus our lips and eyes
Can speak like spirits unconfined
In Heaven, their earthy bodies left behind. 24
1649. *Richard Lovelace.*

TO ALTHEA FROM PRISON

WHEN Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at my grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fettered with her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty. 8

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses crowned,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tiddle in the deep
Know no such liberty. 16

When (like committed linnets) I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty
And glories of my King;

The Lark Now Leaves His Wat'ry Nest

When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
The enlargèd winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty. 24

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage:
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty. 32

1649.

Richard Lovelace

“THE LARK NOW LEAVES HIS WAT'RY NEST”

THE lark now leaves his wat'ry nest,
And climbing shakes his dewy wings
He takes this window for the East,
And to implore your light he sings—
Awake, awake! the morn will never rise
Till she can dress her beauty at your eyes. 6

The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,
The ploughman from the sun his season takes;
But still the lover wonders what they are
Who look for day before his mistress wakes
Awake, awake! break thro' your veils of lawn!
Then draw your curtains, and begin the dawn! 12

1672.

Sir William Davenant.

ON A GIRDLE

THAT which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind;
No monarch but would give his crown,
His arms might do what this has done. 4

It was my Heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely deer:
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move 8

A narrow compass! and yet there
Dwelt all that 's good, and all that 's fair!
Give me but what this ribband bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round! 12

1645.

Edmund Waller.

HEAR, YE LADIES

From Valentinian

HEAR, ye ladies that despise
What the mighty Love has done;
Fear examples and be wise:
Fair Callisto was a nun;

Disdain Returned

Leda, sailing on the stream
To deceive the hopes of man,
Love accounting but a dream,
Doted on a silver swan;
Danaë, in a brazen tower,
Where no love was, loved a shower. 10

Hear, ye ladies that are coy,
What the mighty Love can do;
Fear the fierceness of the boy:
The chaste Moon he makes to woo;
Vesta, kindling holy fires,
Circled round about with spies,
Never dreaming loose desires,
Doting at the altar dies,
Ilion, in a short hour, higher
He can build, and once more fire. 20

1647.

John Fletcher

DISDAIN RETURNED

He that loves a rosy cheek,
Or a coral lip admires,
Or from starlike eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires;
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away. 6

But a smooth and steadfast mind,
Gentle thoughts, and calm desires,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Hearts with equal love combined,
Kindle never-dying fires :—
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely checks or lips or eyes. . . . 12

1632.

Thomas Carew.

SONG

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose ;
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep. 4

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day ;
For in pure love heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair. 8

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past ;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters and keeps warm her note. 12

Ask me no more where those stars light
That downwards fall in dead of night ;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fix'd become as in their sphere. 16

Ask me no more if east or west
The Phœnix builds her spicy nest ;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies. 20

1640.

Thomas Carew.

TO HIS INCONSTANT MISTRESS

WHEN thou, poor Excommunicate
From all the joys of Love, shalt see
The full reward and glorious fate
Which my strong faith shall purchase me,
Then curse thine own inconstancy! 5

A fairer hand than thine shall cure
That heart which thy false oaths did wound;
And to my soul a soul more pure
Than thine shall by Love's hand be bound,
And both with equal glory crown'd. 10

Then shalt thou weep, entreat, complain
To Love, as I did once to thee,
When all thy tears shall be as vain
As mine were then. for thou shalt be
Damn'd for thy false apostasy 15

1640.

Thomas Carew.

ELIZABETH OF BOHEMIA

You meaner beauties of the night,
Which poorly satisfy our eyes
More by your number than your light,
You common people of the skies,
What are you, when the Moon shall rise? 5

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Ye curious chanters of the wood
That warble forth dame Nature's lays,
Thinking your passions understood
By your weak accents ; what's your praise
When Philomel her voice doth raise? 10

Ye violets that first appear,
By your pure purple mantles known
Like the proud virgins of the year
As if the spring were all your own,—
What are you, when the Rose is blown? 15

So when my Mistress shall be seen
In form and beauty mind,
By virtue first, then choice, a Queen,
Tell me, if she were not design'd
The eclipse and glory of her kind? 20

1620? 1624.

Sir Henry Wotton.

GO, LOVELY ROSE

Go, lovely Rose--
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be. 5

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung

The Dream

In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died. 10

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired :
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired. 15

Then die—that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee ;
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair ! 20

1645.

Thomas Waller.

THE DREAM

DEAR love, for nothing less than thee
Would I have broke this happy dream ;
It was a theme
For reason, much too strong for fantasy.
Therefore thou waked'st me wisely ; yet
My dream thou brok'st not, but continued'st it.
Thou art so true that thoughts of thee suffice
To make dreams truths and fables histories ;
Enter these arms, for since thou thought'st it best
Not to dream all my dream, let 's act the rest. 10

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

As lightning, or a taper's light,
Thine eyes, and not thy noise, waked me ;
 Yet I thought thee—
For thou lov'st truth—an angel, at first sight ;
But when I saw thou saw'st my heart,
And knew'st my thoughts beyond an angel's art,
When thou knew'st what I dreamt, when thou
 knew'st when
Excess of joy would wake me, and cam'st then,
I must confess it could not choose but be
Profane to think thee anything but thee. 20

Coming and staying show'd thee thee,
But rising makes me doubt that now
 That art not thou
That Love is weak where Fear 's as strong as he ;
'T is not all spirit pure and brave
If mixture it of Fear, Shame, Honour have
Perchance as torches, which must ready be,
Men light and put out, so thou deal'st with me.
Thou cam'st to kindle, go'st to come : then I
Will dream that hope again, but else would die 30
1633. *John Donne.*

TO CHLORIS

From The Mulberry Garden

AN, Chloris ! that I now could sit
As unconcerned as when
Your infant beauty could beget
No pleasure, nor no pain. 4

To Chloris

When I the dawn used to admire,
And praised the coming day,
I little thought the growing fire
Must take my rest away. 8

Your charms in harmless childhood lay,
Like metals in the mine;
Age from no face took more away,
Than youth concealed in thine. 12

But as your charms insensibly
To their perfection prest,
Fond Love as unperceived did fly,
And in my bosom rest. 16

My passion with your beauty grew,
And Cupid at my heart,
Still as his mother favored you,
Threw a new flaming dart. 20

Each gloried in their wanton part:
To make a lover, he
Employed the utmost of his art;
To make a Beauty, she 24

Though now I slowly bend to love
Uncertain of my fate,
If your fair self my chains approve,
I shall my freedom hate. 28

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Lovers, like dying men, may well
At first disordered be,
Since none alive can truly tell
What fortune they must see 32

1668 *Sir Charles Sedley*

AH, HOW SWEET IT IS TO LOVE!

From Tyrannic Love

AH, how sweet it is to love!
Ah, how gay is young desire!
And what pleasing pains we prove
When we first approach love's fire!
Pains of love be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are 6

Sighs which are from lovers blown
Do but gently heave the heart ·
Even the tears they shed alone
Cure, like trickling balm, their smart.
Lovers, when they lose their breath,
Bleed away in easy death. 12

Love and Time with reverence use,
Treat them like a parting friend;
Nor the golden gifts refuse
Which in youth sincere they send:
For each year their price is more,
And they less simple than before. 18

Song

Love, like spring-tides full and high,
 Swells in every youthful vein;
But each tide does less supply,
 Till they quite shrink in again.
If a flow in age appear,
'T is but rain, and runs not clear 24

1670.

John Dryden.

SONG

From Abdelazar

Love in fantastic triumph sate,
 Whilst bleeding hearts around him flow'd,
For whom fresh pains he did create,
 And strange tyrannic power he show'd:
From thy bright eyes he took his fires,
 Which round about in sport he hurl'd;
But 't was from mine he took desires
 Enough t' undo the amorous world. 8

From me he took his sighs and tears,
 From thee his pride and cruelty;
From me his languishments and fears,
 And every killing dart from thee.
Thus thou and I the god have arm'd
 And set him up a deity;
But my poor heart alone is harm'd,
 Whilst thine the victor is, and free! 16

1677.

Aphra Behn.

SALLY IN OUR ALLEY

OF all the girls that are so smart
There 's none like pretty Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley
There is no lady in the land
Is half so sweet as Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley 8

Her father he makes cabbage-nets,
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
To such as please to buy 'em:
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley 16

When she is by, I leave my work,
I love her so sincerely;
My master comes, like any Turk,
And bangs me most severely:
But let him bang his bellyful,
I 'll bear it all for Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley. 24

Sally in Our Alley

Of all the days that 's in the week
I dearly love but one day—
And that 's the day that comes betwixt
A Saturday and Monday;
For then I 'm drest, all in my best,
To walk abroad with Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley. 32

My master carries me to church,
And often am I blamèd
Because I leave him in the lurch
As soon as text is namèd;
I leave the church in sermon-time
And slink away to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley. 40

When Christmas comes about again,
O, then I shall have money,
I 'll hoard it up, and box it all,
I 'll give it to my honey.
I would it were ten thousand pound,
I 'd give it all to Sally;
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley 48

My master and the neighbours all
Make game of me and Sally,
And, but for her, I 'd better be
A slave and row a galley;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

But when my seven long years are out,
O, then I 'll marry Sally ;
O, then we 'll wed, and then we 'll bed—
But not in our alley! 56

1729?

Henry Carey.

MY DEAR AND ONLY LOVE, I PRAY

My dear and only love, I pray
That little world, of thee,
Be governed by no other sway
Than purest monarchy.
For if confusion have a part,
Which virtuous souls abhor,
And hold a synod in thine heart,
I 'll never love thee more. 8

As Alexander I will reign,
And I will reign alone ;
My thoughts did evermore disdain
A rival on my throne :
He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That dares not put it to the touch,
To gain or lose it all. 16

But I will reign, and govern still,
And always give the law,
And have each subject at my will,
And all to stand in awe ;

Song

But 'gainst my batteries if I find
Thou kick, or vex me sore,
As that thou set me up a blind,
I 'll never love thee more 24

And in the empire of thine heart,
Where I should solely be,
If others do pretend a part,
Or dare to vie with me,
Or if committees thou erect,
And go on such a score,
I 'll laugh and sing at thy neglect,
And never love thee more. 32

But if thou wilt prove faithful, then,
And constant of thy word,
I 'll make thee glorious by my pen,
And famous by my sword;
I 'll serve thee in such noble ways
Was never heard before,
I 'll crown and deck thee all with bays,
And love thee more and more. 40

1711. *James Graham, Marquis of Montrose*

SONG

My silks and fine array,
My smiles and languish'd air,
By Love are driven away;
And mournful lean Despair

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Brings me yew to deck my grave:
Such end true lovers have. 6

His face is fair as heaven
When springing buds unfold:
O why to him was 't given,
Whose heart is wintry cold?
His breast is Love's all-worshipp'd tomb,
Where all Love's pilgrims come. 12

Bring me an axe and spade,
Bring me a winding-sheet;
When I my grave have made,
Let winds and tempests beat:
Then down I 'll lie, as cold as clay:
True love doth pass away! 18

1783.

William Blake.

THE BANKS OF DOON

YE flowery banks o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fair!
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sac fu' o' care! 4

Thou 'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings upon the bough;
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luve was true. 8

Mary Morison

Thou 'll break my heart, thou bonnie bird
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate. 12

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon
To see the woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love,
And sae did I o' mine. 16

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Frac aff its thorny tree;
And my fause luvver staw the rose,
But left the thorn wi' me. 20

792.

Robert Burns.

MARY MORISON

O MARY, at thy window be!
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour.
Those smiles and glances let me see,
That make the miser's treasure poor:
How blythely wad I bide the stour,
A weary slave frae sun to sun,
Could I the rich reward secure,
The lovely Mary Morison! 8

Yestreen, when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat, but neither heard nor saw:

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Tho' this was fair, and that was braw,
And yon the toast of a' the town,
I sigh'd, and said amang them a',
"Ye arena Mary Morison." 16

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace,
Wha for thy sake wad gladly die?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Whase only faut is loving thee?
If love for love thou wiltna gie,
At least be pity to me shown;
A thought ungentle canna be
The thought o' Mary Morison. 24

1793. 1800.

Robert Burns.

O, SAW YE BONNIE LESLEY?

O, saw ye bonnie Lesley,
As she gaed o'er the border?
She 's gane, like Alexander,
To spread her conquests farther. 4

To see her is to love her,
And love but her forever;
For nature made her what she is,
And never made anither! 8

Thou art a queen, fair Lesley,
Thy subjects we, before thee;
Thou art divine, fair Lesley,
The hearts o' men adore thee. 12

O My Luve 's Like a Red, Red Rose

The deil he could na scaith thee,
Or aught that wad belang thee;
He 'd look into thy bonnie face,
And say, "I canna wrang thee!" 16

The Powers aboon will tent thee;
Misfortune sha' na steer thee;
Thou 'rt like themsel' sae lovely
That ill they 'll ne'er let near thee. 20

Return again, fair Lesley,
Return to Caledonie!
That we may brag we hae a lass
There 's nane again sae bonnie 24

1798.

Robert Burns

O MY LUVE 'S LIKE A RED, RED ROSE

O MY Luve 's like a red, red rose
That 's newly sprung in June:
O my Luve 's like the melodie
That 's sweetly play'd in tune.
As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luvè am I:
And I will luvè thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry: 8

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.
And fare thee weel, my only Love!
And fare thee weel a while!
And I will come again, my Love,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile. 16

1796.

Robert Burns

Æ FOND KISS

Æ fond kiss, and then we sever;
Æ farewell, and then for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee. 4

Who shall say that Fortune grieves him
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me. 8

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy;
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever. 12

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted.
We had ne'er been broken-hearted. 16

Of a' the Airts

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest !
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest !
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure ! 20

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever !
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever !
Deep in heart-wrung tears I 'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I 'll wage thee. 24

1792.

Robert Burns.

OF A' THE AIRTS

OF a' the airts the wind can blaw,
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best :
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And monie a hill between ;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean. 8

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair :
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air :
There 's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green ;
There 's not a bonnie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean. 16

1790.

Robert Burns.

HIGHLAND MARY

YE banks and braes and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfauld her robes,
And there the longest tarry;
For there I took the last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary. 8

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasp'd her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary. 16

Wi' monie a vow and lock'd embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But oh! fell Death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green 's the sod, and cauld 's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary! 24

If Doughty Deeds

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips
I aft hae kiss'd sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly;
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary. 32

1792. 1799.

Robert Burns.

IF DOUGHTY DEEDS

If doughty deeds my lady please,
Right soon I 'll mount my steed;
And strong his arm and fast his seat,
That bears frae me the meed.
I 'll wear thy colours in my cap,
Thy picture in my heart;
And he that bends not to thine eye
Shall rue it to his smart!
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake nae care I 'll take,
Tho' ne'er another trow me. 12

If gay attire delight thine eye,
I 'll dight me in array;
I 'll tend thy chamber door all night,
And squire thee all the day.

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

If sweetest sounds can win thine ear,
These sounds I 'll strive to catch;
Thy voice I 'll steal to woo thyself',
That voice that nane can match. 20

But if fond love thy heart can gain,
I never broke a vow;
Nae maiden lays her skaith to me,
I never loved but you.
For you alone I ride the ring,
For you I wear the blue,
For you alone I strive to sing,
O tell me how to woo!
Then tell me how to woo thee, Love;
O tell me how to woo thee!
For thy dear sake nae care I 'll take
Tho' ne'er another trow me. 32

1801-2.

Robert Cunningham-Graham.

COUNTY GUY

Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange-flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark, his lay who trill'd all day,
Sits hush'd his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour,
But where is County Guy? 8

“ Fly to the Desert, Fly with Me ”

The village maid steals through the shade

Her shepherd's suit to hear ;

To Beauty shy, by lattice high,

Sings high-born Cavalier.

The star of Love, all stars above,

Now reigns o'er earth and sky ;

And high and low the influence know—

But where is County Guy? 16

823.

Sir Walter Scott.

FLY TO THE DESERT, FLY WITH ME ”

From Lalla Rookh

“ FLY to the desert, fly with me,

Our Arab tents are rude for thee ;

But oh ! the choice what heart can doubt

Of tents with love or thrones without? 4

“ Our rocks are rough, but smiling there

The acacia waves her yellow hair,

Lonely and sweet, nor loved the less

For flowering in a wilderness. 8

“ Our sands are bare, but down their slope

The silvery-footed antelope

As gracefully and gayly springs

As o'er the marble courts of kings. 12

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

"Then come,—thy Arab maid will be
The loved and lone acacia-tree,
The antelope, whose feet shall bless
With their light sound thy loneliness. 16

"Oh! there are looks and tones that dart
An instant sunshine through the heart,
As if the soul that minute caught
Some treasure it through life had sought; 20

"As if the very lips and eyes,
Predestined to have all our sighs,
And never be forgot again,
Sparkled and spoke before as then! 24

"So came thy every glance and tone,
When first on me they breathed and shone;
New, as if brought from other spheres,
Yet welcome as if loved for years. 28

"Then fly with me, if thou hast known
No other flame, nor falsely thrown
A gem away, that thou hadst sworn
Should ever in thy heart be worn. 32

"Come, if the love thou hast for me
Is pure and fresh as mine for thee,—
Fresh as the fountain underground,
When first 't is by the lapwing found. 36

"But if for me thou dost forsake
Some other maid, and rudely break

“ Believe Me, if those Young Charms ”

Her worshipped image from its base,
To give to me the ruined place;— 40

‘ Then, fare thee well!—I ’d rather make
My bower upon some icy lake
When thawing suns begin to shine,
Than trust to love so false as thine! ” 44

There was a pathos in this lay,
That even without enchantment’s art
Would instantly have found its way
Deep into Selim’s burning heart. 48

1817.

Thomas Moore

“ BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE EN- DEARING YOUNG CHARMS ”

BELIEVE me, if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my
arms,

Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment
thou art,

Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still. 8

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

That the fervor and faith of a soul may be known,
To which time will but make thee more dear!
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sunflower turns to her god when he sets
The same look which she turned when he
rose!

16

1808.

Thomas Moore.

JENNY KISSED ME

JENNY kissed me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in.
Time, you thief! who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in.
Say I 'm weary, say I 'm sad;
Say that health and wealth have missed me;
Say I 'm growing old, but add—
Jenny kissed me!

1844?

Leigh Hunt.

HOW MANY TIMES DO I LOVE THEE, DEAR?"

From Torrismond

How many times do I love thee, dear?
Tell me how many thoughts there be
In the atmosphere
Of a new-fall'n year,

The Indian Serenade

Whose white and sable hours appear
The latest flake of Eternity:
So many times do I love thee, dear. 7

How many times do I love again?
Tell me how many beads there are
In a silver chain
Of evening rain,
Unravell'd from the tumbling main,
And threading the eye of a yellow star:
So many times do I love again. 14

1824-5 1851

Thomas Lovell Beddoes.

THE INDIAN SERENADE

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright:
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me--who knows how!
To thy chamber window, Sweet! 8

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
And the Champak odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart;—

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

As I must on thine,
O! belovèd as thou art! 16

Oh lift me from the grass!
I die! I faint! I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;—
Oh! press it to thine own again,
Where it will break at last. 24

1822.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE Fountains mingle with the River
And the Rivers with the Ocean,
The winds of Heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one spirit meet and mingle.
Why not I with thine?— 8

See the mountains kiss high Heaven
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother,
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea:
What are all these kissings worth
If thou kiss not me? 16

1819.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

I FEAR THY KISSES, GENTLE MAIDEN

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden;
Thou needest not fear mine;
My spirit is too deeply laden
Ever to burden thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion;
Thou needest not fear mine;
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine

1820. 1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

TO —

ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it.
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

8

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not,
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow? 16

1821. 1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

TO

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odors, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.
Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone
Love itself shall slumber on.

1821. 1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:

“ When We Two Parted ”

When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming; 8

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep.
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean 16

1816.

Lord Byron.

· WHEN WE TWO PARTED ”

WHEN we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this. 8

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame:
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame. 16

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well:
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell. 24

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears. 32

1816.

Lord Byron.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that 's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies. 6

How Delicious is the Winning

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face ;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place. 12

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent ! 18

315.

Lord Byron.

HOW DELICIOUS IS THE WINNING

How delicious is the winning
Of a kiss at Love's beginning,
When two mutual hearts are sighing
For the knot there 's no untying ! 1

Yet remember, 'midst your wooing,
Love has bliss, but Love has ru'ning
Other smiles may make you fickle,
Tears for other charms may trickle.

Love he comes, and Love he tarries,
Just as fate or fancy carries ;
Longest stays, when sorest chidden ;
Laughs and flies, when press'd and bidden. 12

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Bind the sea to slumber stilly,
Bind its odour to the lily,
Bind the aspen ne'er to quiver,
Then bind Love to last for ever! 16

Love's a fire that needs renewal
Of fresh beauty for its fuel:
Love's wing moults when caged and
captured,
Only free, he soars enraptured. 20

Can you keep the bee from ranging,
Or the ringdove's neck from changing?
No! nor fetter'd Love from dying
In the knot there 's no untying. 24

1851?

Thomas Campbell.

SONG

SHE is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be,
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smiled on me;
Oh! then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light. 6

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,

“ It Was Not in the Winter ”

And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye :
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are. 12

1833.

Hartley Coleridge.

“ IT WAS NOT IN THE WINTER ”

It was not in the winter
Our loving lot was cast ;
It was the time of roses,
We pluck'd them as we pass'd. 4

That churlish season never frown'd
On early lovers yet :
Oh, no—the world was newly crown'd
With flowers when first we met ! 8

'T was twilight, and I bade you go,
But still you held me fast ;
It was the time of roses,
We pluck'd them as we pass'd. 12

What else could peer thy glowing cheek,
That tears began to stud ?
And when I ask'd the like of Love,
You snatch'd a damask bud ; 16

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And op'd it to the dainty core,
Still glowing to the last.
It was the time of roses,
We pluck'd them as we pass'd. 20

1827.

Thomas Hood.

FAIR INES

O SAW ye not fair Ines?
She 's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest:
She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast. 8

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivall'd bright;
And blessèd will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write! 16

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier,
Who rode so gaily by thy side,
And whisper'd thee so near!

Fair Ines

Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear? 24

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With hands of noble gentlemen,
And banners waved before;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore:
It would have been a beauteous dream,—
If it had been no more! 32

Alas, alas! fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
To her you 've loved so long. 40

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines!
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before,—
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore!
The smile that bless'd one lover's heart
Has broken many more! 48

SONG

SWEET in her green dell the flower of beauty
 slumbers,
Lull'd by the faint breezes sighing through
 her hair;
Sleeps she and hears not the melancholy numbers
 Breathed to my sad lute 'mid the lonely air. 4

Down from the high cliffs the rivulet is teeming
 To wind round the willow banks that lure
 him from above:
O that in tears, from my rocky prison streaming,
 I too could glide to the bower of my love! 8

Ah! where the woodbines with sleepy arms have
 wound her,
Opes she her eyelids at the dream of my lay,
Listening, like the dove, while the fountains
 echo round her,
To her lost mate's call in the forests far
 away. 12

Come then, my bird! For the peace thou ever
 bearest,
Still Heaven's messenger of comfort to me—

At the Church Gate

Come—this fond bosom, O faithfullest and fairest,
Bleeds with its death-wound, its wound of
love for thee! 16

1826?

George Darley.

AT THE CHURCH GATE

ALTHOUGH I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
Ofttimes I hover;
And near the sacred gate
With longing eyes I wait,
Expectant of her. 6

The minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
And noise and humming;
They 've hushed the minster bell;
The organ 'gins to swell;
She 's coming, she 's coming! 12

My lady comes at last,
Timid and stepping fast,
And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast;
She comes,—she 's here, she 's past!
May Heaven go with her! 18

Kneel undisturbed, fair saint!
Pour out your praise or plaint
Meekly and duly;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
With thoughts unruly. 24

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits, who wait,
And see, through Heaven's gate,
Angels within it. 30

1855.

William Makepeace Thackeray

SUMMER DAWN

PRAY but one prayer for me 'twixt thy closed lips,
Think but one thought of me up in the stars.
The summer night waneth, the morning light
slips,

Faint and grey 'twixt the leaves of the aspen,
betwixt the cloud-bars,
That are patiently waiting there for the dawn
Patient and colourless, though Heaven's gold
Waits to float through them along with the sun.
Far out in the meadows, above the young corn,
The heavy elms wait, and restless and cold
The uneasy wind rises; the roses are dun; 10
Through the long twilight they pray for the
dawn,

Round the lone house in the midst of the corn
Speak but one word to me over the corn,
Over the tender, bow'd locks of the corn.

1858.

William Morris.

THE NYMPH'S SONG TO HYLAS

From Life and Death of Jason

I KNOW a little garden close
Set thick with lily and red rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy dawn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.

And though within it no birds sing,
And though no pillared house is there,
And though the apple boughs are bare
Of fruit and blossom, would to God,
Her feet upon the green grass trod,
And I beheld them as before.

10

There comes a murmur from the shore,
And in the place two fair streams are,
Drawn from the purple hills afar,
Drawn down unto the restless sea;
The hills whose flowers ne'er fed the bee,
The shore no ship has ever seen,
Still beaten by the billows green,
Whose murmur comes unceasingly
Unto the place for which I cry.

20

For which I cry both day and night,
For which I let slip all delight,
That maketh me both deaf and blind,
Careless to win, unskilled to find,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And quick to lose what all men seek.

Yct tottering as I am, and weak,
Still have I left a little breath
To seek within the jaws of death
An entrance to that happy place,
To seek the unforgotten face 30
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from me
Anigh the murmuring of the sea.

1867.

William Morris.

BEDOUIN LOVE-SONG

FROM the Desert I come to thee,
On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
And the midnight hears my cry:
I love thee, I love but thee!
With a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold! 12

Look from thy window, and see
My passion and my pain!
I lie on the sands below,
And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night-winds touch thy brow
With the heat of my burning sigh,

“ Oh! That We Two Were Maying ”

And melt thee to hear the vow
Of a love that shall not die
*Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!*

24

My steps are nightly driven,
By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
The love that shall fade no more
*Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!*

36

1854.

Bayard Taylor

“ OH! THAT WE TWO WERE
MAYING ”

From *The Saint's Tragedy*

OH! that we two were Maying
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze;
Like children with violets playing
In the shade of the whispering trees.

4

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Oh! that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimm'd down,
Watching the white mist steaming
Over river and mead and town. 8

Oh! that we two lay sleeping
In our nest in the churchyard sod,
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God. 12
1848. *Charles Kingsley.*

TO HELEN

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicæan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore. 5

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome. 10

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land! 15

1831. *Edgar Allan Poe.*

THE BROOK-SIDE

I WANDER'D by the brook-side,
I wander'd by the mill ;
I could not hear the brook flow,
The noisy wheel was still ;
'There was no burr of grasshopper,
No chirp of any bird,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard 8

I sat beneath the elm-tree .
I watch'd the long, long shade,
And, as it grew still longer,
I did not feel afraid ,
For I listen'd for a footfall,
I listen'd for a word,—
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard. 16

He came not,—no, he came not,—
The night came on alone,
The little stars sat, one by one,
Each on his golden throne ;
The evening air pass'd by my cheek,
The leaves above were stirr'd,—
But the beating of my own heart,
Was all the sound I heard. 24

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Fast silent tears were flowing,
When something stood behind;
A hand was on my shoulder,
I knew its touch was kind :
It drew me nearer—nearer,
We did not speak one word,
For the beating of our own hearts
Was all the sound we heard. 32

1830.

Richard Monckton Milnes.

A HEALTH

I FILL this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon ;
To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'T is less of earth than heaven. 8

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words ;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows,
As one may see the burdened bee
Forth issue from the rose. 16

A Health

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancý,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—
The idol of past years! 24

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers. 32

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon—
Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name 40

1825.

Edward Coate Pinkney

VII

“ASK ME NO MORE”

From The Princess

ASK me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take
the shape

With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape,
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?

Ask me no more. 5

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?

I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:

Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;

Ask me no more. 10

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:

I strove against the stream and all in vain:

Let the great river take me to the main:

No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;

Ask me no more. 15

1850.

Lord Tennyson.

“THE SPLENDOR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS”

From The Princess

THE splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story :
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying. 6

O hark ! O hear ! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going !
O sweet and far, from cliff and scar,
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying. 12

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river ;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,
dying. 18

1850.

Lord Tennyson.

“COME INTO THE GARDEN,
MAUD ”

From *Maud*

COME into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone ;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown. 6

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die. 12

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon ;
All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd
To the dancers dancing in tune ;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon. 18

“ Come into the Garden, Maud ”

I said to the lily, “ There is but one,
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play.”
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away. 20

I said to the rose, “ The brief night goes
In habble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine,” so I sware to the rose,
“ For ever and ever, mine ” 32

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clash'd in the Hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the
wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all ; 38

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise. 44

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea ,
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me ;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee. 52

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one ,
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun. 58

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate,
She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
She is coming, my life, my fate
The red rose cries, " She is near, she is near ; "
And the white rose weeps, " She is late ; "
The larkspur listens, " I hear, I hear ; "
And the lily whispers, " I wait." 66

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed ;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead ;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red. 74

1855.

Lord Tennyson.

IV

O THAT 'T WERE POSSIBLE

From Maud

O THAT 't were possible
After long grief and pain
'To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again! 4

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixed with kisses sweeter, sweeter
Than anything on earth. 10

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee:
Ah, Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be! 16

It leads me forth at evening,
It lightly winds and steals
In a cold white robe before me,
When all my spirit reels

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
And the roaring of the wheels. 21

Half the night I waste in sighs,
Half in dreams I sorrow after
The delight of early skies ;
In a wakeful doze I sorrow
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
For the meeting of the morrow,
The delight of happy laughter,
The delight of low replies 39

'T is a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendor falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls ;
'T is a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow fleet ;
She is walking in the meadow,
And the woodland echo rings ;
In a moment we shall meet ;
She is singing in the meadow,
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the ballad that she sings 43

Do I hear her sing as of old.
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eye ?
But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry,
There is some one dying or dead,
And a sullen thunder is roll'd ;

O That 't Were Possible

For a tumult shakes the city,
And I wake, my dream is fled ;
In the shuddering dawn, behold,
Without knowledge, without pity,
By the curtains of my bed
That abiding phantom cold ! 55

Get thee hence, nor come again,
Mix not memory with doubt,
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
Pass and cease to move about !
'T is the blot upon the brain
That *will* show itself without. 61

Then I rise, the cave-drops fall,
And the yellow vapors choke
The great city sounding wide ;
The day comes, a dull red ball
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
On the misty river-tide. 67

Thro' the hubbub of the market
I steal, a wasted frame ;
It crosses here, it crosses there,
'Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
The shadow still the same ;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame. 74

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Came glimmering thro' the laurels
At the quiet evenfall,
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall! 80

Would the happy spirit descend
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,
Should I fear to greet my friend
Or to say, "Forgive the wrong."
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest"? 88

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me:
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee. 98

1855.

Lord Tennyson.

LONGING

COME to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day. 4

Meeting at Night

Come, as thou cam'st a thousand times,
A messenger from radiant climes,
And smile on thy new world, and be
As kind to others as to me! 8

Or, as thou never cam'st in sooth,
Come now, and let me dream it truth;
And part my hair, and kiss my brow,
And say: *My love! why sufferest thou?* 12

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For then the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day 16

1852.

Matthew Arnold.

I

MEETING AT NIGHT

THE gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;

. Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each! 12

II

PARTING AT MORNING

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me

1845

Robert Browning

. MISCONCEPTIONS

THIS is a spray the Bird clung to,
Making it blossom with pleasure,
Ere the high tree-top she sprung to,
Fit for her nest and her treasure.
Oh, what a hope beyond measure
Was the poor spray's, which the flying feet hung
to,—
So to be singled out, built in, and sung to! 7

This is a heart the Queen leant on,
Thrilled in a minute erratic,

A Dead Rose

Ere the true bosom she bent on,
Meet for love's regal dalmatic.
Oh, what a fancy ecstatic
Was the poor heart's, ere the wanderer went on—
Love to be saved for it, proffered to, spent on! 14
1855. *Robert Browning.*

A DEAD ROSE

O ROSE, who dares to name thee?
No longer roseate now, nor soft nor sweet,
But pale and hard and dry as stubble wheat,—
Kept seven years in a drawer, thy title shames
thee 4

The breeze that used to blow thee
Between the hedgerow thorns, and take away
An odour up the lane to last all day,—
If breathing now, unsweetened would forego
thee 8

The sun that used to smite thee,
And mix his glory in thy gorgeous urn
Till beam appeared to bloom, and flower to
burn,—
If shining now, with not a hue would light thee 12

The dew that used to wet thee,
And, white first, grow incarnadined because
It lay upon thee where the crimson was,—
If dropping now, would darken where it met
thee. 16

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

The fly that lit upon thee
To stretch the tendrils of its tiny feet
Along thy leaf's pure edges after heat,—
If 'lighting now, would coldly overrun thee. 20

The bee that once did suck thee,
And build thy perfumed ambers up his hive,
And swoon in thee for joy, till scarce alive,—
If passing now, would blindly overlook thee. 24

The heart doth recognize thee,
Alone, alone! the heart doth smell thee sweet,
Doth view thee fair, doth judge thee most
complete,
Perceiving all those changes that disguise thee. 28

Yes, and the heart doth owe thee
More love, dead rose, than to any roses bold
Which Julia wears at dances, smiling cold:—
Lie still upon this heart which breaks below
thee! 32

1846.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

A MAN'S REQUIREMENTS

LOVE me, Sweet, with all thou art,
Feeling, thinking, seeing;
Love me in the lightest part,
Love me in full being. 4

A Man's Requirements

Love me with thine open youth
In its frank surrender ;
With the vowing of thy mouth,
With its silence tender. 8

Love me with thine azure eyes,
Made for earnest granting ;
Taking colour from the skies,
Can Heaven's truth be wanting ? 12

Love me with their lids, that fall
Snowlike at first meeting ;
Love me with thine heart, that all
Neighbours then see beating 16

Love me with thine hand stretched out
Freely—open-minded :
Love me with thy loitering foot,—
Hearing one behind it. 20

Love me with thy voice, that turns
Sudden faint above me ;
Love me with thy blush that burns
When I murmur *Love me !* 24

Love me with thy thinking soul,
Break it to love-sighing ;
Love me with thy thoughts that roll
On through living—dying. 28

Love me in thy gorgeous airs,
When the world has crowned thee ;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Love me, kneeling at thy prayers,
With the angels round thee. 32

Love me pure, as musers do,
Up the woodlands shady:
Love me gaily, fast and true,
As a winsome lady. 36

Through all hopes that keep us brave,
Further off or nigher,
Love me for the house and grave,
And for something higher. 40

Thus, if thou wilt prove me, Dear,
Woman's love no fable,
I will love thee—half a year—
As a man is able. 44

1846.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

SONGS OF PATRIOTISM

A FAREWELL TO ARMS

(TO QUEEN ELIZABETH)

His golden locks Time hath to silver turn'd;
O Time too swift, O swiftness never ceasing!
His youth 'gainst time and age hath ever
 spurn'd,
But spurn'd in vain, youth waneth by
 increasing:
Beauty, strength, youth, are flowers but fading
 seen;
Duty, faith, love, are roots, and ever green. 6

His helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And, lovers' sonnets turn'd to holy psalms,
A man-at-arms must now serve on his knees,
And feed on prayers, which are Age his alms
But though from court to cottage he depart,
His Saint is sure of his unspotted heart 12

And when he saddest sits in homely cell,
He'll teach his swains this carol for a song, —
"Blest be the hearts that wish my sovereign well,
Curst be the souls that think her any wrong"
Goddess, allow this aged man his right
To be your headsman now that was your
 knight. 18

1590.

George Peele

LXXXIII

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE
WARS

TELL me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly. 4

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield. 8

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more 12

1649

Richard Lovelace.

BANNOCKBURN

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victorie!

A Farewell

Now 's the day, and now 's the hour :
See the front o' battle lour,
See approach proud Edward's power,—
Chains and slaverie! 8

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee! 12

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa',
Let him follow me! 16

By Oppression's woes and pains,
By your sons in servile chains,
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free! 20

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty 's in every blow!
Let us do, or die! 24

1794.

Robert Burns.

A FAREWELL

Go fetch to me a pint o' wine,
And fill it in a silver tassie;
That I may drink before I go
A service to my bonnie lassie!

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

The boat rocks at the pier of Leith,
Fu' loud the wind blows frae the Ferry,
The ship rides by the Berwick-law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary. 8

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
The glittering spears are rankèd ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
The battle closes deep and bloody;
It 's not the roar o' sea or shore
Wad make me langer wish to tarry;
Nor shouts o' war that 's heard afar:
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary. 16

1790.

Robert Burns.

“IT WAS A' FOR OUR RIGHTFU' KING ”

It was a' for our rightfu' king
We left fair Scotland's strand;
It was a' for our rightfu' king,
We e'er saw Irish land,
My dear—
We e'er saw Irish land. 6

Now a' is done that men can do,
And a' is done in vain;
My love and native land, farewell,
For I maun cross the main,
My dear—
For I maun cross the main. 12

Pibroch of Donald Dhu

He turn'd him right and round about
Upon the Irish shore;
And gae his bridle-reins a shake,
With, Adieu for evermore,
My dear—
And, Adieu for evermore! 18

The sodger frae the wars returns,
The sailor frae the main;
But I hae parted frae my love,
Never to meet again,
My dear—
Never to meet again. 24

When day is gane, and night is come,
And a' folk bound to sleep,
I think on him that's far awa',
The lee-lang night, and weep,
My dear—
The lee-lang night, and weep. 30

1796.

Robert Burns.

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons. 8

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Come from deep glen and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade and
Strong hand that bears one. 16

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadsword and targes. 24

Come as the winds come when
Forests are rended;
Come as the waves come when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master. 32

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume
Blended with heather.

The Chief Who in Triumph Advances

Cast your plaids, draw your blades,

Forward each man set!

Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,

Knell for the onset!

40

1816.

Sir Walter Scott.

“HAIL TO THE CHIEF WHO IN TRIUMPH ADVANCES!”

From The Lady of the Lake

HAIL to the Chief who in triumph advances!

Honored and blessed be the ever-green Pine!

Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,

Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!

Heaven send it happy dew,

Earth lend it sap anew,

Gayly to bourgeon and broadly to grow,

While every Highland glen

Sends our shout back again,

“Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!” 10

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
tain,

Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;

When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on
the mountain,

The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her
shade.

Moored in the rifted rock,

Proof to the tempest's shock,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow ;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then
Echo his praise again,
“ Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe ! ” 20

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied ;
Glen-Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in
ruin,
And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her
side.
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe ;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear again,
“ Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe ! ” 30

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the High-
lands !
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green Pine !
O that the rosebud that graces yon islands
Were wreathed in a garland around him to
twine !
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem
Honored and blessed in their shadow might
grow !
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
“ Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe ! ” 40

1810.

Sir Walter Scott.

CAVALIER TUNES

I

MARCHING ALONG

KENTISH Sir Byng stood for his King,
Bidding the crop-headed Parliament swing:
And, pressing a troop unable to stoop
And see the rogues flourish and honest folk
 droop,
Marched them along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song. 6

God for King Charles! Pym and such carles
To the Devil that prompts 'em their treasonous
 parles!

Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,
Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor sup
Till you 're—

CHORUS.—Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
 this song? 12

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell.
Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry as
 well!

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

England, good cheer! Rupert is near!

Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

CHORUS.—Marching along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
this song? 13

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his
snarls

To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent
carles!

Hold by the right, you double your might;

So, onward to Nottingham, fresh for the fight,

CHORUS.—March we along, fifty-score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing
this song! 24

II

GIVE A ROUSE

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?

Give a rouse: here's, in hell's despite now,

King Charles!

Who gave me the goods that went since?

Who raised me the house that sank once?

Who helped me to gold I spent since?

Who found me in wine you drank once?

CHORUS.—King Charles, and who'll do him
right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for fight
now?

Cavalier Tunes

Give a rouse: here 's, in hell's despite
now,
King Charles!

12

To whom used my boy George quaff else,
By the old fool's side that begot him?
For whom did he cheer and laugh else,
While Noll's damned troopers shot him?

CHORUS —King Charles, and who 'll do him
right now?

King Charles, and who 's ripe for fight
now?

Give a rouse: here 's, in hell's despite
now,
King Charles!

20

III

BOOT AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse and away!
Rescue my castle before the hot day
Brightens to blue from its silvery gray

CHORUS —Boot, saddle, to horse, and away! 4

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you 'd say;
Many 's the friend there, will listen and pray
' God's luck to gallants that strike up the lay—

CHORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and away! " 8

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads'
array:

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my fay, .

CHORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and
away!"

12

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest and gay,
Laughs when you talk of surrendering, "Nay!
I've better counsellors; what counsel they?

CHORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and
away!"

16

1842.

Robert Browning.

RULE, BRITANNIA

From Alfred

WHEN Britain first at Heaven's command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian angels sung the strain:
Rule, Britannia, rule the waves!
For Britons never will be slaves.

6

The nations not so blest as thee
Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall;
While thou shalt flourish, great and free,
The dread and envy of them all.

10

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
Serves but to root thy native oak.

14

England and America in 1782

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame;
All their attempts to bend thee down
Will but arouse thy generous flame,
But work their woe, and thy renown. 18

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine;
All thine shall be the subject main,
And every shore it circles thine. 22

The Muses, still with Freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair;
Blest Isle! with matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair. 26

1740.

James Thomson.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782

O THOU that sendest out the man
To rule by land and sea,
Strong mother of a Lion-line,
Be proud of those strong sons of thine
Who wrench'd their rights from thee! 5

What wonder if in noble heat
Those men thine arms withstood,
Retaught the lesson thou hadst taught,
And in thy spirit with thee fought—
Who sprang from English blood! 10

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

But Thou rejoice with liberal joy,
Lift up thy rocky face,
And shatter, when the storms are black,
In many a streaming torrent back,
The seas that shock thy base! 15

Whatever harmonies of law
The growing world assume,
Thy work is thine—the single note
From that deep chord which Hampden smote
Will vibrate to the doom. 20

1872.

Lord Tennyson.

MY DARK ROSALEEN

O MY Dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep!
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the deep
There's wine from the royal Pope,
Upon the ocean green;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
My Dark Rosaleen! 12

Over hills and thro' dales,
Have I roam'd for your sake;

My Dark Rosaleen

All yesterday I sail'd with sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne, at its highest flood,
I dash'd across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
O, there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lighten'd thro' my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen!

24

All day long, in unrest,
To and fro, do I move
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love!
The heart in my bosom faints
To think of you, my Queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen!

36

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

'T is you shall reign, shall reign alone,

My Dark Rosaleen!

My own Rosaleen!

'T is you shall have the golden throne,

'T is you shall reign, and reign alone,

My Dark Rosaleen!

48

Over dews, over sands,

Will I fly for your weal:

Your holy delicate white hands

Shall girdle me with steel.

At home, in your emerald bowers,

From morning's dawn till e'en,

You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,

My Dark Rosaleen!

My fond Rosaleen!

You'll think of me through daylight hours,

My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,

My Dark Rosaleen!

60

I could scale the blue air,

I could plough the high hills,

O, I could kneel all night in prayer,

To heal your many ills!

And one beamy smile from you

Would float like light between

My toils and me, my own, my true,

My Dark Rosaleen!

My fond Rosaleen!

Would give me life and soul anew,

A second life, a soul anew,

My Dark Rosaleen!

72

The Star-Spangled Banner

O, the Erne shall run red,
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal and slogan-cry
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My Dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
The Judgement Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen!

84

1845?

James Clarence Mangan.

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

O SAY, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's
last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through
the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly
streaming!
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in
air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was
still there;
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the
brave?

8

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

On that shore dimly seen through the mists of the
deep,

Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence
reposes,

What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering
steep,

As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?

Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first
beam,

In full glory reflected now shines in the stream;

'T is the star-spangled banner; O long may it
wave

O'er the land of the free, and the home of the
brave!

16

And where are the foes who so vauntingly swore

That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion

A home and a country should leave us no more?

Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps'
pollution;

No refuge could save the hireling and slave

From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the
grave;

And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth
wave

O'er the land of the free, and the home of the
brave.

24

O thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand

Between their loved homes and the war's
desolation!

Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heaven-
rescued land

The American Flag

Praise the Power that hath made and preserved
us a nation!

Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto, "In God is our trust";
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall
wave

O'er the land of the free and the home of the
brave.

32

1813.

Francis Scott Key.

THE AMERICAN FLAG

WHEN Freedom from her mountain height
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there.
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then from his mansion in the sun
She called her eagle bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

12

Majestic monarch of the cloud,
Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest trummings loud
And see the lightning lances driven,
When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven,
Child of the sun! to thee 't is given
To guard the banner of the free,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory!

25

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high,
When speaks the signal trumpet tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on
Ere yet the life-blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier eye shall brightly turn
To where the sky-born glories burn;
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance.
And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud,
And gory sabres rise and fall
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall,
Then shall thy meteor glances glow,
And cowering foes shall shrink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

43

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frightened waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's reeling rack,

Old Ironsides

Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendours fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.
Flag of the free heart's hope and home!
By angel hands to valor given;
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before
us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er
us?

61

1819.

Joseph Rodman Drake.

OLD IRONSIDES

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more!

8

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea! 16

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to her mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the God of storms, -
The lightning and the gale! 24

1830. 1836.

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

CONCORD HYMN

Sung at the Completion of the Battle Monument,
April 19, 1836.

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world. 4

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward
creeps. 8

Concord Hymn

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone ;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone. 12

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee. 16

1836. *Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

SONGS OF LIFE'S PILGRIMAGE

THE HAPPY HEART

From Patient Grissell

ART thou poor ; yet hast thou golden slumbers ?

O, sweet content !

Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexèd ?

O, punishment !

Dost thou laugh, to see how fools are vexèd

To add to golden numbers, golden numbers ?

O, sweet content ! O, sweet content !

Work apace, apace, apace, apace ;

Honest labour bears a lovely face ;

Then hey nonny, nonny ; hey nonny, nonny ! 10

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring ?

O, sweet content !

Swimm'st thou in wealth ; yet sink'st in thine

own tears ?

O, punishment !

Then he that patiently want's burden bears,

No burden bears ; but is a king, a king !

O, sweet content ! O, sweet content !

Work apace, apace, apace, apace .

Honest labour bears a lovely face ;

Then hey nonny, nonny ; hey nonny, nonny ! 20

1603.

Thomas Delker

A WISH

MINE be a cot beside the hill ;
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear ;
A willowy brook, that turns a mill,
With many a fall shall linger near. 4

The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch,
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest ;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest. 8

Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew ;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing
In russet gown and apron blue. 12

The village-church, among the trees,
Where first our marriage-vows were
given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze,
And point with taper spire to heaven. 16

1786.

Samuel Rogers.

SONG

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,
Spirit of Delight!
Wherefore hast thou left me now
Many a day and night?
Many a weary night and day
'T is since thou art fled away. 6

How shall ever one like me
Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free
Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not. 12

As a lizard with the shade
Of a trembling leaf,
Thou with sorrow art dismayed;
Even the sighs of grief
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,
And reproach thou wilt not hear. 18

Let me set my mournful ditty
To a merry measure,
Thou wilt never come for pity,
Thou wilt come for pleasure,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Pity then will cut away
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay. 24

I love all that thou lovest,
Spirit of Delight!
The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,
And the starry night;
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born. 30

I love snow, and all the forms
Of the radiant frost;
I love waves, and winds, and storms,
Every thing almost
Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery. 36

I love tranquil solitude,
And such society
As is quiet, wise, and good;
Between thee and me
What difference? but thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less. 42

I love Love—though he has wings,
And like light can flee,
But above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life! Oh come,
Make once more my heart thy home. 48

1821. 1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

DREAM-PEDLARY

If there were dreams to sell,
 What would you buy?
Some cost a passing bell,
 Some a light sigh,
'That shakes from Life's fresh crown
Only a rose-leaf down
If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rang the bell,
 What would you buy? 10

A cottage lone and still,
 With bowers nigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
 Until I die.
Such pearl from Life's fresh crown
Fain would I shake me down
Were dreams to have at will,
This would best heal my ill,
 This would I buy 19

But there were dreams to sell
 Ill didst thou buy;
Life is a dream, they tell,
 Waking, to die.

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Dreaming a dream to prize,
Is wishing ghosts to rise;
And, if I had the spell
To call the buried well,
Which one would I? 28

If there are ghosts to raise,
What shall I call,
Out of hell's murky haze,
Heaven's blue pall?
Raise my loved long-lost boy
To lead me to his joy.—
There are no ghosts to raise;
Out of death lead no ways;
Vain is the call. 37

Know'st thou not ghosts to sue?
No love thou hast.
Else lie, as I will do,
And breathe thy last.
So out of Life's fresh crown
I'll like a rose-leaf down
Thus are the ghosts to woo;
Thus are all dreams made true,
Ever to last! 46

1851.

Thomas Lovell Beddoes.

GOOD-BY

GOOD-BY, proud world! I'm going home:
Thou art not my friend, and I'm not thine.

Good-By

Long through thy weary crowds I roam ;
A river-ark on the ocean brine,
Long I've been tossed like the driven foam ;
But now, proud world ! I'm going home 6

Good-by to Flattery's fawning face ;
To Grandeur with his wise grimace ;
To upstart Wealth's averted eye ;
To supple Office, low and high ;
To crowded halls, to court and street ;
To frozen hearts and hasting feet ;
To those who go, and those who come ;
Good-by, proud world ! I'm going home. 14

I'm going to my own hearth-stone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,—
A secret nook in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned,
Where arches green, the livelong day,
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,
And vulgar feet have never trod
A spot that is sacred to thought and God 22

O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome ;
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,
At the sophist schools, and the learned clan ;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet ? 30

1839.

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day;
 All the jolly chase is here,
 With hawk and horse and hunting-spear!
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
 Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
 “Waken, lords and ladies gay.” 8

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
 Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
 Diamonds on the brake are gleaming:
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
 Now we come to chant our lay,
 “Waken, lords and ladies gay.” 16

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away;
 We can show you where he lies,
 Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
 You shall see him brought to bay;
 “Waken, lords and ladies gay.” 24

Youth and Love

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman, who can balk,
Staunch as hound and fleet as hawk?
Think of this and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay! 32

1808.

Sir Walter Scott.

YOUTH AND LOVE

ONCE only by the garden gate
Our lips we joined and parted.
I must fulfil an empty fate
And travel the uncharted. 4

Hail and farewell! I must arise,
Leave here the fatted cattle,
And paint on foreign land and skies
My Odyssey of battle. 8

The untented Kosmos my abode,
I pass, a wilful stranger:
My mistress still the open road
And the bright eyes of danger. 12

Come ill or well, the cross, the crown,
The rainbow or the thunder,
I fling my soul and body down
For God to plough them under 16

1895.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

AS SLOW OUR SHIP

As slow our ship her foamy track
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her trembling pennant still looked back
To that dear isle 't was leaving.
So loath we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;
So turn our hearts as on we rove,
To those we 've left behind us. 8

When, round the bowl, of vanished years
We talk, with joyous seeming,—
With smiles that might as well be tears,
So faint, so sad their beaming;
While memory brings us back again
Each early tie that twined us,
O, sweet 's the cup that circles then
To those we 've left behind us. 16

And when, in other climes, we meet
Some isle, or vale enchanting,
Where all looks flowery, wild, and sweet,
And naught but love is wanting;
We think how great had been our bliss,
If Heaven had but assigned us
To live and die in scenes like this,
With some we 've left behind us! 24

A Canadian Boat-Song

As travellers oft look back at eve,
When eastward darkly going,
To gaze upon that light they leave
Still faint behind them glowing,—
So, when the close of pleasure's day
To gloom hath near consigned us,
We turn to catch one fading ray
Of joy that 's left behind us. 32

1818.

Thomas Moore.

A CANADIAN BOAT-SONG

FAINTLY as tolls the evening chime
Our voices keep tune and our oars keep time.
Soon as the woods on shore look dim,
We'll sing at St. Ann's our parting hymn.
Row, brothers, row, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near and the daylight's past! 6

Why should we yet our sail unfurl?
There is not a breath the blue wave to curl;
But, when the wind blows off the shore,
Oh! sweetly we'll rest our weary oar.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near and the daylight's past! 12

Utawa's tide! this trembling moon
Shall see us float over thy surges soon.

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Saint of this green isle! hear our prayers,
Oh! grant us cool heavens and favoring airs.
Blow, breezes, blow, the stream runs fast,
The rapids are near and the daylight's past 18

1804.

Thomas Moore

THE BELLS

HEAR the sledges with the bells—
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells. 14

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony fore-
tells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats

The Bells

To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
 On the moon!
 (), from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
 How it swells!
 How it dwells
 On the Future! how it tells
 Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
 Of the bells, bells, bells,
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells—
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells! 35

Hear the loud alarum bells—
 Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
 In the startled ear of night
 How they scream out their affright!
 Too much horrified to speak,
 They can only shriek, shriek,
 Out of tune,
In the clamorous appealing to the mercy of the
 fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic
 fire,
 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 With a desperate desire,
 And a resolute endeavor,
 Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon. 50

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows:
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the
bells—
Of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamour and the clangour of the bells! 69

Hear the tolling of the bells—
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody
compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.

The Bells

And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
 All alone,
And who, tolling, tolling, tolling,
 In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
 On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—

 They are Ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
 Rolls

 A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
 With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the pæan of the bells—

 Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the throbbing of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
 To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
 As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
 To the rolling of the bells—
Of the bells, bells, bells—
 To the tolling of the bells,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Of the bells, bells, bells, bells—

Bells, bells, bells—

To the moaning and the groaning of the bells 113

1849

Edgar Allan Poe

THE BELLS OF SHANDON

WITH deep affection

And recollection

I often think of

Those Shandon bells,

Whose sounds so wild would,

In the days of childhood,

Fling around my cradle

Their magic spells

On this I ponder

Where'er I wander,

And thus grow fonder,

Sweet Cork, of thee,

With thy bells of Shandon,

That sound so grand on

The pleasant waters

Of the River Lee.

16

I've heard bells chiming

Full many a clime in,

Tolling sublime in

Cathedral shrine,

While at a glib rate

Brass tongues would vibrate—

The Bells of Shandon

But all their music
Spoke naught like thine ;
For memory dwelling
On each proud swelling
Of the belfry knelling
Its bold notes free,
Made the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the River Lee

32

I 've heard bells tolling
Old " Adrian's Mole " in,
Their thunder rolling
From the Vatican,
And cymbals glorious
Swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets
Of Notre Dame ;
But thy sounds were sweeter
Than the dome of Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber,
Pealing solemnly,—
O' the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the River Lee

48

There 's a bell in Moscow,
While on tower and kiosk O' !
In Saint Sophia
The Turkman gets,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And loud in air
Calls men to prayer
From the tapering summits
Of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom
I freely grant them;
But there's an anthem
More dear to me,—
'T is the bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the River Lee.

64

1834.

Francis Mahony.

THE DAY IS DONE

THE day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

4

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
That my soul cannot resist:

8

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

12

The Day is Done

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day. 16

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time 20

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor;
And to-night I long for rest. 24

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start; 28

Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies. 32

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer. 36

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

41

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

44

1844.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

THE POET'S SONG TO HIS WIFE

How many Summers, love,
Have I been thine?
How many days, thou dove,
Hast thou been mine?
Time, like the wingèd wind
When 't bends the flowers,
Hath left no mark behind,
To count the hours!

8

Some weight of thought, though loath,
On thee he leaves;
Some lines of care round both
Perhaps he weaves;
Some fears,—a soft regret
For joys scarce known;
Sweet looks we half forget;—
All else is flown!

16

To Mary

Ah! With what thankless heart
I mourn and sing!
Look, where our children start,
Like sudden Spring!
With tongues all sweet and low,
Like a pleasant rhyme,
They tell how much I owe
To thee and Time!

24

1832

Bryan Waller Procter

TO MARY

THE twentieth year is well-nigh past,
Since first our sky was overcast.
Ah, would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

4

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow,
'T was my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

8

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more,
My Mary!

12

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

16

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary! 20

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter'd in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary! 24

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary! 28

For, could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary! 32

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet gently press'd, press gently mine,
My Mary! 36

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st
That now at every step thou mov'st
Upheld by two, yet still thou lov'st,
My Mary! 40

John Anderson My Jo

And still to love, though press'd with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

44

But ah! by constant heed I know
How oft the sadness that I show
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

48

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last,
My Mary!

52

1793.

William Cowper.

JOHN ANDERSON MY JO

JOHN ANDERSON my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw,
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson my jo!

8

John Anderson my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And monie a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we 'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson my jo! 16

1790.

Robert Burns.

PIPING DOWN THE VALLEYS

PIPING down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me: 4

“Pipe a song about a lamb!”
So I piped with merry cheer.
“Piper, pipe that song again”;
So I piped: he wept to hear. 8

“Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!”
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear. 12

“Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.”
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed, 16

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear. 20

1789.

William Blake.

SEPHESTIA'S LULLABY

From *Menaphon*

WEEP not, my wanton, smile upon my knee ;
When thou art old there 's grief enough for thee !
 Mother's wag, pretty boy,
 Father's sorrow, father's joy ;
 When thy father first did see
 Such a boy by him and me,
 He was glad, I was woe ;
 Fortune changèd made him so,
 When he left his pretty boy,
 Last his sorrow, first his joy !

10

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee ;
When thou art old there 's grief enough for thee !
 Streaming tears that never stint,
 Like pearl drops from a flint,
 Fell by course from his eyes,
 That one another's place supplies ;
 Thus he grieved in every part,
 Tears of blood fell from his heart,
 When he left his pretty boy,
 Father's sorrow, father's joy !

20

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee ;
When thou art old there 's grief enough for thee.

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

The wanton smiled, father wept,
Mother cried, baby leapt;
More he crow'd, more we cried,
Nature could not sorrow hide:
He must go, he must kiss
Child and mother, baby bliss,
For he left his pretty boy,
Father's sorrow, father's joy! 30

Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee;
When thou art old there's grief enough for thee!

1589

Robert Greene

FOREIGN LANDS

Up into the cherry-tree
Who should climb but little me?
I held the trunk with both my hands
And looked abroad on foreign lands. 4

I saw the next-door garden lie,
Adorned with flowers before my eye,
And many pleasant places more
That I had never seen before. 8

I saw the dimpling river pass
And be the sky's blue looking-glass;
The dusty roads go up and down
With people tramping into town. 12

Sweet and Low

If I could find a higher tree
Farther and farther I should see,
To where the grown-up river slips
Into the sea among the ships, 16

To where the roads on either hand
Lead onward into fairy land,
Where all the children dine at five,
And all playthings come alive. 20

1885.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

SWEET AND LOW

From The Princess

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one,
sleeps. 8

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west

Under the silver moon :

Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one,
sleep.

16

1850.

Lord Tennyson.

DUTCH LULLABY

WYNKEN, Blynken, and Nod one night

Sailed off in a wooden shoe,—

Sailed on a river of misty light

Into a sea of dew.

“Where are you going, and what do you wish?”

The old moon asked the three.

“We have come to fish for the herring-fish

That live in this beautiful sea ;

Nets of silver and gold have we,”

Said Wynken,

Blynken,

And Nod.

12

The old moon laughed and sung a song,

As they rocked in the wooden shoe ;

And the wind that sped them all night long

Ruffled the waves of dew.

The little stars were the herring-fish

That lived in the beautiful sea ;

“Now cast your nets wherever you wish,

But never afraid are we !”

Dutch Lullaby

So cried the stars to the fishermen three,
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

24

All night long their nets they threw
 For the fish in the twinkling foam,
Then down from the sky came the wooden shoe,
 Bringing the fishermen home ;
'T was all so pretty a sail, it seemed
 As if it could not be ;
And some folk thought 't was a dream they 'd
 dreamed
 Of sailing that beautiful sea ;
But I shall name you the fishermen three :
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

36

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
 And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
 Is a wee one's trundle-bed ;
So shut your eyes while Mother sings
 Of the wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
 As you rock in the misty sea
Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen
 three,—
 Wynken,
 Blynken,
 And Nod.

48

1889.

Eugene Field.

A PETITION TO TIME

TOUCH us gently, Time!

Let us glide adown thy stream

Gently,—as we sometimes glide

Through a quiet dream!

Humble voyagers are We,

Husband, wife, and children three—

(One is lost,—an angel, fled

To the azure overhead!)

8

TOUCH us gently, Time!

We've not proud nor soaring wings:

Our ambition, *our* content,

Lies in simple things

Humble voyagers are we,

O'er Life's dim unsounded sea,

Seeking only some calm clime;—

Touch us *gently*, gentle Time!

16

1832.

Bryan Waller Procter.

THE MAHOGANY TREE

CHRISTMAS is here:

Winds whistle shrill,

Icy and chill,

Little care we:

The Mahogany Tree

Little we fear
Weather without,
Sheltered about
The Mahogany Tree. 8

Once on the boughs
Birds of rare plume
Sang, in its bloom ;
Night-birds are we :
Here we carouse,
Singing like them,
Perched round the stem
Of the jolly old tree. 16

Here let us sport,
Boys, as we sit ;
Laughter and wit
Flashing so free.
Life is but short—
When we are gone,
Let them sing on
Round the old tree. 24

Evenings we knew,
Happy as this ;
Faces we miss,
Pleasant to see
Kind hearts and true,
Gentle and just,
Peace to your dust !
We sing round the tree. 32

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Care, like a dun,
Lurks at the gate :
Let the dog wait ;
Happy we 'll be !
Drink, every one ;
Pile up the coals,
Fill the red bowls,
Round the old tree ! 40

Drain we the cup.—
Friend, art afraid ?
Spirits are laid
In the Red Sea.
Mantle it up,
Empty it yet ;
Let us forget,
Round the old tree ! 48

Sorrows, begone !
Life and its ills,
Duns and their bills,
Bid we to flee.
Come with the dawn,
Blue-devil sprite,
Leave us to-night,
Round the old tree. 56

1855.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

THE AGE OF WISDOM

Ho, pretty page, with the dimpled chin,
That never has known the barber's shear,
All your wish is woman to win,
This is the way that boys begin,—
Wait till you come to Forty Year 5

Curly gold locks cover foolish brains,
Billing and cooing is all your cheer;
Sighing and singing of midnight strains,
Under Bonnybell's window panes,—
Wait till you come to Forty Year. 10

Forty times over let Michaelmas pass,
Grizzling hair the brain doth clear—
Then you know a boy is an ass,
Then you know the worth of a lass,
Once you have come to Forty Year 15

Pledge me round, I bid ye declare,
All good fellows whose beards are gray,
Did not the fairest of the fair
Common grow and wearisome ere
Ever a month was past away? 20

The reddest lips that ever have kissed,
The brightest eyes that ever have shone,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

May pray and whisper, and we not list,
Or look away, and never be missed,
Ere yet ever a month is gone. 25

Gillian's dead, God rest her bier,
How I loved her twenty years syne!
Marian's married, but I sit here
Alone and merry at Forty Year,
Dipping my nose in the Gascon wine. 30

1855.

William Makepeace Thackeray.

BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND

From As You Like It

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere
folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly. 10

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:

Three Men of Gotham

Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere
folly:
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly

20

1623

William Shakespeare

THREE MEN OF GOTHAM

From Nightmare Abbey

SEAMEN three! What men be ye?
Gotham's three wise men we be.
Whither in your bowl so free?
To rake the moon from out the sea.
The bowl goes trim The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine;
And your ballast is old wine

7

Who art thou, so fast adrift?
I am he they call Old Care.
Here on board we will thee lift.
No: I may not enter there.
Wherefore so? 'T is Jove's decree,
In a bowl Care may not be;
In a bowl Care may not be.

14

Fear ye not the waves that roll
No: in charmed bowl we swim.

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

What the charm that floats the bowl?
Water may not pass the brim.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine;
And your ballast is old wine. 21

1818.

Thomas Love Peacock.

GOOD ALE

From Gammer Gurton's Needle

I CANNOT eat but little meat;
My stomach is not good;
But, sure, I think that I can drink
With him that wears a hood!
Though I go bare; take ye no care,
I nothing am a-cold!
I stuff my skin so full within
Of jolly good ale and old.
Back and side go bare, go bare!
Both foot and hand go cold!
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough;
Whether it be new or old! 12

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast,
And a crab laid in the fire;
A little bread shall do me stead,—
Much bread I not desire!
No frost, nor snow, nor wind, I trow,
Can hurt me if I would;
I am so wrapt, and thoroughly lapt
Of jolly good ale and old! 20

A Winter Wish

And Tyb, my wife, that as her life
Loveth well good ale to seek,
Full oft drinks she, till you may see
The tears run down her cheek;
Then doth she trowl to me the bowl,
Even as a Malt Worm should,
And saith, " Sweetheart, I took my part
Of this jolly good ale and old!" 28

Now let them drink till they nod and wink,
Even as Good Fellows should do,
They shall not miss to have the bliss
Good ale doth bring men to;
And all poor souls that have scoured bowls,
Or have them lustily trowled,
God save the lives of them and their wives,
Whether they be young or old! 36

1575-

*John Still, or more probably,
William Stevenson.*

A WINTER WISH

OLD wine to drink!
Ay, give the slippery juice
That drippeth from the grape thrown loose
Within the tun;
Plucked from beneath the cliff
Of sunny-sided Teneriffe,
And ripened 'neath the blink
Of India's sun!
Peat whiskey hot,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Tempered with well-boiled water !
These make the long night shorter,—
 Forgetting not
Good stout old English porter.

13

Old wood to burn !
Ay, bring the hill-side beech
From where the owlets meet and screech,
 And ravens croak ;
The crackling pine, and cedar sweet ;
Bring too a clump of fragrant peat,
 Dug 'neath the fern ;
 The knotted oak,
 A fagot too, perhaps,
Whose bright flame, dancing, winking,
Shall light us at our drinking ;
 While the oozing sap
Shall make sweet music to our thinking

26

Old books to read !
Ay, bring those nodes of wit,
The brazen-clasped, the vellum writ,
 Time-honored tomes !
The same my grandsire scanned before,
The same my grandsire thumbèd o'er,
The same his sire from college bore,
 The well-earned meed
 Of Oxford's domes :
 Old Homer blind,
Old Horace, rake Anacreon, by
Old Tully, Plautus, Terence lie ;

Auld Lang Syne

Mort Arthur's olden minstrelsie,
Quaint Burton, quainter Spenser, ay!
And Gervase Markham's venerie—
Nor leave behind
The Holye Book by which we live and die. 43

Old friends to talk!
Ay, bring those chosen few,
The wise, the courtly, and the true,
So rarely found;
Him for my wine, him for my stud,
Him for my easel, distich, bud
In mountain walk!
Bring Walter good,
With soulful Fred, and learned Will,
And thee, my *alter ego* (dearer still
For every mood)
These add a bouquet to my wine!
These add a sparkle to my pine!
If these I tine,
Can books, or fire, or wine be good? 53

1838

Robert Huckle Messinger

AULD LANG SYNE

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne!

4

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

CHORUS

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne. 8

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine,
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne! 12

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine,
But we've wandered mony a weary fit
Sin' auld lang syne. 16

We twa hae paidl'd in the burn
Frae morning sun till dine,
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin' auld lang syne. 20

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o' thine,
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught
For auld lang syne. 24

1788. 1796.

Robert Burns.

MY LOST YOUTH

OFTEN I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea ;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still :
" A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts "

9

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still :
" A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts."

18

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free ;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And the magic of the sea.

And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still :

“ A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts.”

27

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,

And the fort upon the hill ;

The sunrise gun with its hollow roar,

The drum-beat repeated o’er and o’er,

And the bugle wild and shrill.

And the music of that old song

Throbs in my memory still :

“ A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts.”

36

I remember the sea-fight far away,

How it thunder’d o’er the tide !

And the dead captains, as they lay

In their graves, o’erlooking the tranquil bay

Where they in battle died.

And the sound of that mournful song

Goes through me with a thrill :

“ A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts.”

45

I can see the breezy dome of groves,

The shadows of Deering’s Woods ;

And the friendships old and the early loves

Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves

My Lost Youth

In quiet neighbourhoods.

And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still :

“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts.” 54

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the school-boy’s brain ;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.

And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on, and is never still :
“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts.” 63

There are things of which I may not speak ;
There are dreams that cannot die ;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart
weak,

And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill :

“A boy’s will is the wind’s will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts.” 72

Strange to me now are the forms I meet
When I visit the dear old town ;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-
known street,
As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are sighing and whispering still :
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts." 81

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were,
I find my lost youth again
And the strange and beautiful song,
The groves are repeating it still :
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long
thoughts." 90

1855.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

CCLXXXV

A LAMENT

O WORLD! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb
Trembling at that where I had stood before;
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—Oh, never more!

“Gains for all Our Losses”

Out of the day and night

A joy has taken flight;

Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
No more—Oh, never more!

1821. 1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

“THERE ARE GAINS FOR ALL OUR LOSSES”

THERE are gains for all losses,

There are balms for all our pain:

But when youth, the dream, departs,

It takes something from our hearts,

And it never comes again. 5

We are stronger, and are better,

Under manhood's sterner reign:

Still we feel that something sweet

Followed youth, with flying feet,

And will never come again. 10

Something beautiful is vanished,

And we sigh for it in vain:

We behold it everywhere,

On the earth, and in the air,

But it never comes again. 15

1880.

Richard Henry Stoddard.

“ IN A DREAR-NIGHTED
DECEMBER ”

IN a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree,
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity :
The north cannot undo them,
With a sleety whistle through them ;
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime. 8

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy brook,
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look ;
But with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time. 16

Ah ! would 't were so with many
A gentle girl and boy !
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passèd joy ?
To know the change and feel it,
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbèd sense to steal it,
Was never said in rhyme. 24

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER "

I REMEMBER, I remember,
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon,
Nor brought too long a day,
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away! 8

I remember, I remember,
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups,
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built,
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday,—
The tree is living yet! 16

I remember, I remember,
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow! 24

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

I remember, I remember,
The fir-trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky:
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 't is little joy
To know I'm farther off from Heav'n
Than when I was a boy. 32

1826.

Thomas Hood.

THOU LINGERING STAR

THOU ling'ring star with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn
O Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast? 8

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
Where, by the winding Ayr, we met
To live one day of parting love?
Eternity cannot efface
Those records dear of transports past,
Thy image at our last embrace—
Ah! little thought we 't was our last! 16

“Oft, in the Stilly Night”

Ayr, gurgling, kiss'd his pebbled shore.
O'erhung with wild woods thickening green;
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar
'Twin'd amorous round the raptur'd scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray,
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of wingèd day. 24

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser-care
Time but th' impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
O Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Sec'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast? 32
1790. *Robert Burns.*

“OFT, IN THE STILLY NIGHT”

OFT, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me,
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me. 14

When I remember all
The friends, so linked together,
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather ;
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed !
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me. 28

1818.

Thomas Moore.

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more. 5

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,

Mother, I Cannot Mind my Wheel

Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more. 10

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more. 15

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more ! 20

1847.

Lord Tennyson.

MOTHER, I CANNOT MIND MY WHEEL

MOTHER, I cannot mind my wheel ;
My fingers ache, my lips are dry :
Oh ! if you felt the pain I feel !
But oh, who ever felt as I !
No longer could I doubt him true—
All other men may use deceit ;
He always said my eyes were blue,
And often swore my lips were sweet

1846.

Walter Savage Landor.

“WHEN THE LAMP IS SHAT- TERED ”

WHEN the lamp is shattered
The light in the dust lies dead—
When the cloud is scattered
The rainbow's glory is shed.
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot. 8

As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute:—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell. 16

When hearts have once mingled
Love first leaves the well-built nest,
The weak one is singled
To endure what is once possessed.
O Love! who bewailest

I Complete my Thirty-Sixth Year

The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your
bier?

24

Its passions will rock thee
As the storms rock the ravens on high:
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come. 32

22. 1824.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

'T is time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile. 1.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain. 16

But 't is not *thus*—and 't is not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul,
nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow 20

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free. 24

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home! 28

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be, 32

“ Soldier, Rest ! thy Warfare O’er ”

If thou regrett’st thy youth, *why live?*

The land of honourable death
Is here:—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath !

36

Seek out—less often sought than found—

A soldier’s grave, for thee the best ;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest

40

1824.

Lord Byron.

“ SOLDIER, REST ! THY WARFARE
O’ER ”

From The Lady of the Lake

SOLDIER, rest ! thy warfare o’er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking ;
Dream of battled fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking
In our isle’s enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o’er,
Dream of fighting fields no more ;
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

12

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armor’s clang, or war-steed champing,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here 's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping 24

Huntsman, rest ! thy chase is done,
While our slumberous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillé
Sleep ! the deer is in his den ;
Sleep ! thy hounds are by thee lying :
Sleep ! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying
Huntsman, rest ! thy chase is done ;
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye
Here no bugles sound reveillé. 36

1810.

Sir Walter Scott.

MELANCHOLY

From The Nice Valour

HENCE, all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights
Wherein you spend your folly !

The Bridge

There's naught in this life sweet,
If men were wise to see 't,
But only melancholy—
O sweetest melancholy!
Welcome, folded arms and fixed eyes,
A sight that piercing mortifies,
A look that 's fasten'd to the ground,
A tongue chain'd up without a sound! 11

Fountain-heads and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves!
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are warmly housed, save bats and owls!
A midnight bell, a parting groan—
These are the sounds we feed upon.
Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy
valley,
Nothing's so dainty sweet as lovely
melancholy. 19

1647.

John Fletcher.

THE BRIDGE

I stood on the bridge at midnight,
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church-tower. 4

I saw her bright reflection
In the waters under me,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Like a golden goblet falling
And sinking into the sea. 8

And far in the hazy distance
Of that lovely night in June,
The blaze of the flaming furnace
Gleamed redder than the moon. 12

Among the long, black rafters
The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean
Seemed to lift and bear them away ; 16

As, sweeping and eddying through them,
Rose the belated tide,
And, streaming into the moonlight,
The seaweed floated wide 20

And like those waters rushing
Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
That filled my eyes with tears. 24

How often, O how often,
In the days that had gone by,
I had stood on that bridge at midnight
And gazed on that wave and sky ! 28

How often, O how often,
I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
O'er the ocean wild and wide ! 32

The Bridge

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear. 36

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me. 40

Yet whenever I cross the river
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odor of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years. 44

And I think of how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then. 48

I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
And the old subdued and slow ! 52

And forever and forever,
As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions,
As long as life has woes ; 56

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

The moon and its broken reflection
And its shadows shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
And its wavering image here. 60

1845.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river 6

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river. 12

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,
While turbidly flow'd the river;
And hack'd and hew'd as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of the leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river. 18

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river!)
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,

The Arrow and the Song

Steadily from the outside ring,
And notch'd the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river. 24

"This is the way," laugh'd the great god Pan
(Laugh'd while he sat by the river),
"The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river. 30

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river. 36

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds of the river. 42

1860.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight. 4

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song? 8

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend. 1

1845

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

“THE WORLD’S GREAT AGE BEGINS ANEW”

From Hellas

THE world’s great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn:
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires
gleam,
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream. 6

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning star.
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep. 12

“The World’s Great Age Begins Anew”

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize ;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies.
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore. 18

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death’s scroll must be ;
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew. 24

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime ;
And leave, if naught so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give. 30

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued :
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers. 36

Oh, cease ! must hate and death return ?
Cease ! must men kill and die ?

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn

Of bitter prophecy.

The world is weary of the past,

Oh, might it die or rest at last!

42

1822

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

“HARP OF THE NORTH, FARE- WELL!”

From The Lady of the Lake

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow
dark,

On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,

The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,

And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blend-
ing,

With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing
bee.

9

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!

Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp

May idly cavil at an idle lay.

Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
Through secret woes the world has never
known,

To the Muses

When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devoured alone.—
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine
own. 18

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,
Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
'T is now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
'T is now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell;
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
And now, 't is silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee
well! 27

1810.

Sir Walter Scott.

TO THE MUSES

WHETHER on Ida's shady brow,
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the Sun, that now
From ancient melody have ceased; 4

Whether in heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air
Where the melodious winds have birth; 8

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,
Beneath the bosom of the sea,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Wandering in many a coral grove;
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry; 12

How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sound is forced, the notes are few. 16

1783.

William Blake.

'THE HARP THAT ONCE THROUGH TARA'S HALLS'

THE harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls,
As if that soul were fled.—
So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts, that once beat high for praise,
Now feel that pulse no more. 8

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells;
The chord alone, that breaks at night,
Its tale of ruin tells.
Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives,
Is when some heart indignant breaks,
To show that still she lives. 16

1807

Thomas Moore.

THE LOST LEADER

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allow'd;
How all our copper had gone for his service!
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been
proud!
We that had lov'd him so, follow'd him, honor'd
him,
Liv'd in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learn'd his great language, caught his clear
accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from
their graves!
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
—He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves! ¹⁶

We shall march prospering,—not thro' his
presence;
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire.
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declin'd, one more foot-path untrod,
One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!
Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt, hesitation, and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!
Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardon'd in heaven, the first by the throne! 32
1845. *Robert Browning.*

THE VOICE OF TOIL

I HEARD men saying, Leave hope and praying,
All days shall be as all have been;
To-day and to-morrow bring fear and sorrow,
The never-ending toil between. 4

The Voice of Toil

When Earth was younger mid toil and hunger,
In hope we strove, and our hands were strong;
Then great men led us, with words they fed us,
And bade us right the earthly wrong. 8

Go read in story their deeds and glory,
Their names amidst the nameless dead;
Turn then from lying to us slow-dying
In that good world to which they led; 12

Where fast and faster our iron master,
The thing we made, for ever drives,
Bids us grind treasure and fashion pleasure
For other hopes and other lives. 16

Where home is a hovel and dull we grovel,
Forgetting that the world is fair;
Where no babe we cherish, lest its very soul
perish;
Where mirth is crime, and love a snare. 20

Who now shall lead us, what god shall heed us
As we lie in the hell our hands have won?
For us are no rulers but fools and befoolers,
The great are fallen, the wise men gone. 24

I heard men saying, Leave tears and praying,
The sharp knife heedeth not the sheep;
Are we not stronger than the rich and the
wronger,
When day breaks over dreams and sleep? 28

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Come, shoulder to shoulder ere the world
 grows older!
Help lies in nought but thee and me;
Hope is before us, and the long years that bore
 us
Bore leaders more than men may be. 32

Let dead hearts tarry and trade and marry,
And trembling nurse their dreams of mirth,
While we the living our lives are giving
To bring the bright new world to birth. 36

Come, shoulder to shoulder ere earth grows
 older!
The Cause spreads over land and sea;
Now the world shaketh, and fear awaketh,
And joy at last for thee and me. 40

1884.

William Morris.

THE SONG OF THE SHIRT

With fingers weary and worn,
 With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
 Plying her needle and thread—
 Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
 And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt."

The Song of the Shirt

“Work! work! work!

While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work—work—work,
Till the stars shine through the roof!
It 's, Oh! to be a slave
Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work!

16

“Work—work—work

Till the brain begins to swim;
Work—work—work
Till the eyes are heavy and dim!
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in a dream!

24

“Oh, Men, with Sisters dear!

Oh, Men, with Mothers and Wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out,
But human creatures' lives!
Stitch—stitch—stitch,
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A shroud as well as a Shirt.

32

“But why do I talk of Death?

That Phantom of grisly bone,
I hardly fear his terrible shape,
It seems so like my own—

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

It seems so like my own,
Because of the fasts I keep;
Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap! 40

“ Work—work—work!
My labour never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread—and rags.
That shattered roof—and this naked floor—
A table—a broken chair—
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there! 48

“ Work—work—work!
From weary chime to chime,
Work—work—work—
As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumb'd,
As well as the weary hand. 56

“ Work—work—work,
In the dull December light,
And work—work—work,
When the weather is warm and bright—
While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the Spring. 64

The Song of the Shirt

“ Oh! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet—
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet,
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal! ”

72

“ Oh! but for one short hour!
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope,
But only time for Grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread! ”

80

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread—
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,—
Would that its tone could reach the Rich!—
She sang this “ Song of the Shirt! ”

88

1843.

Thomas Hood.

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my
 brothers,
 Ere the sorrow comes with years?
They are leaning their young heads against
 their mothers,
 And *that* cannot stop their tears.
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
 The young birds are chirping in the nest,
The young fawns are playing with the shadows,
 The young flowers are blowing toward the
 west—
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
 They are weeping bitterly!
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
 In the country of the free. 12

Do you question the young children in the
 sorrow
 Why their tears are falling so?
The old man may weep for his to-morrow
 Which is lost in Long Ago;
The old tree is leafless in the forest,
 The old year is ending in the frost,
The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,
 The old hope is hardest to be lost:

The Cry of the Children

But the young, young children, O my brothers,
Do you ask them why they stand
Weeping sore before the bosoms of their
mothers,
In our happy Fatherland? 24

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their looks are sad to see,
For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses
Down the cheeks of infancy;
'Your old earth,' they say, "is very dreary,
Our young feet," they say, "are very weak;
Few paces have we taken, yet are weary—
Our grave-rest is very far to seek:
Ask the aged why they weep, and not the
children,
For outside the earth is cold,
And we young ones stand without, in our le-
wildering,
And the graves are for the old." 36

'True,' say the children, "it may happen
That we die before our time:
Little Alice died last year, her grave is shapen
Like a snowball, in the rime.
We looked into the pit prepared to take her:
Was no room for any work in the close clay!
From the sleep wherein she lieth none will wake
her,
Crying, 'Get up, little Alice! it is day.'
If you listen by that grave, in sun and shower,
With your ear down, little Alice never cries:

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Could we see her face, be sure we should not
 know her,
 For the smile has time for growing in her
 eyes :
And merry go her moments, lull'd and still'd in
 The shroud by the kirk-chime.
It is good when it happens," say the children,
 "That we die before our time." 52

Alas, alas, the children ! they are seeking
 Death in life, as best to have .
They are binding up their hearts away from
 breaking,
 With a cerement from the grave.
Go out, children, from the mine and from the
 city,
 Sing out, children, as the little thrushes do ;
Pluck your handfuls of the meadow-cowslips
 pretty,
 Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let them
 through !
But they answer, " Are your cowslips of the
 meadows
 Like our weeds anear the mine ?
Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-
 shadows,
 From your pleasures fair and fine ! 64

" For oh," say the children, " we are weary,
 And we cannot run or leap ;
If we car'd for any meadows, it were merely
 To drop down in them and sleep.

The Cry of the Children

Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,
We fall upon our faces, trying to go;
And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,
The reddest flower would look as pale as
snow.

For, all day, we drag our burden tiring
Through the coal-dark, underground,
Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round. 76

“For, all day, the wheels are droning, turning;
Their wind comes in our faces.
Till our hearts turn, our heads with pulses
burning,
And the walls turn in their places:
Turns the sky in the high window, blank and
reeling,
Turns the long light that drops adown the
wall,
Turn the black flies that crawl along the
ceiling:
All are turning, all the day, and we with all.
And all day, the iron wheels are droning,
And sometimes we could pray,
‘O ye wheels’ (break out in a mad moaning),
‘Stop! be silent for to-day!’” 88

Ay, be silent! Let them hear each other
breathing
For a moment, mouth to mouth!
Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh
wreathing
Of their tender human youth!

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Let them feel that this cold metallic motion
Is not all the life God fashions or reveals:
Let them prove their living souls against the
notion

That they live in you, or under you, O
wheels!

Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark;
And the children's souls, which God is calling
sunward,
Spin on blindly in the dark

100

Now tell the poor young children, O my
brothers,
To look up to Him and pray;
So the blessed One who blesseth all the others,
Will bless them another day.
They answer, "Who is God that He should
hear us,
While the rushing of the iron wheels is
stirr'd?

When we sob aloud, the human creatures
near us
Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a word.
And *we* hear not (for the wheels in their
resounding)

Strangers speaking at the door:
Is it likely God, with angels singing round
Him,
Hears our weeping any more?

112

"Two words, indeed, of praying we remember,
And at midnight's hour of harm.

The Cry of the Children

'Our Father,' looking upward in the chamber,
We say softly for a charm.
We know no other words except, 'Our Father,'
And we think that, in some pause of angels'
song,
God may pluck them with the silence sweet
to gather,
And hold both within his right hand which
is strong.
'Our Father!' If He heard us, He would
surely
(For they call Him good and mild)
Answer, smiling down the steep world very
purely,
'Come and rest with me, my child.' 124

'But, no!' say the children, weeping faster,
"He is speechless as a stone:
And they tell us, of His image is the master
Who commands us to work on.
Go to!" say the children,—"up in heaven,
Dark, wheel-like, turning clouds are all we
find.
Do not mock us; grief has made us un-
believing:
We look up for God, but tears have made
us blind."
Do you hear the children weeping and dis-
proving,
O my brothers, what ye preach?
For God's possible is taught by His world's
loving,
And the children doubt of each. 136

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And well may the children weep before you!

They are weary ere they run;

They have never seen the sunshine, nor the
glory

Which is brighter than the sun.

They know the grief of man, without its
wisdom;

They sink in man's despair, without its
calm;

Are slaves, without the liberty in Christdom,

Are Martyrs, by the pang without the palm:

Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievingly

The harvest of its memories cannot reap,—

Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.

Let them weep! let them weep! 148

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,

And their look is dread to see,

For they mind you of their angels in high
places,

With eyes turned on Deity.

"How long," they say, "how long, O cruel
nation,

Will you stand, to move the world, on a
child's heart,—

Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,

And tread onward to your throne amid
the mart?

Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,

And your purple shows your path!

But the child's sob in silence curses deeper

Than the strong man in his wrath." 160

1843.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

SIT DOWN, SAD SOUL

SIT down, sad soul, and count
The moments flying.
Come,—tell the sweet amount
That 's lost by sighing!
How many smiles?—a score?
Then laugh, and count no more;
For day is dying! 7

Lie down, sad soul, and sleep,
And no more measure
The flight of Time, nor weep
The loss of leisure;
But here, by this lone stream,
Lie down with us, and dream
Of starry treasure! 14

We dream: do thou the same:
We love—forever.
We laugh; yet few we shame,
The gentle, never.
Stay, then, till Sorrow dies;
Then—hope and happy skies
Are thine forever! 21

1832.

Bryan Waller Procter.

AT THE MID HOUR OF NIGHT

At the mid hour of night, when stars are
weeping, I fly
To the lone vale we loved, when life shone
warm in thine eye;
And I think oft, if spirits can steal from
the regions of air,
To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt
come to me there,
And tell me our love is remember'd, even in
the sky. 5

Then I sing the wild song 't was once such
pleasure to hear!
When our voices commingling, breathed, like
one on the ear;
And, as Echo far off through the vale my
sad orison rolls,
I think, O my love! 't is thy voice from the
Kingdom of Souls,
Faintly answering still the notes that once were
so dear. 10

1813.

Thomas Moore.

FOR ANNIE

THANK Heaven! the crisis—
The danger is past,
And the lingering illness
Is over at last—
And the fever called "Living"
Is conquered at last.

6

Sadly, I know
I am shorn of my strength,
And no muscle I move
As I lie at full length—
But no matter!—I feel
I am better at length.

12

And I rest so composedly,
Now, in my bed,
That any beholder
Might fancy me dead—
Might start at beholding me,
Thinking me dead.

18

The moaning and groaning,
The sighing and sobbing,
Are quieted now,
With that horrible throbbing

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

At heart:—ah, that horrible,
Horrible throbbing; 24

The sickness—the nausea—
The pitiless pain—
Have ceased, with the fever
That maddened my brain—
With the fever called “Living”
That burned in my brain. 30

And oh! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst!—
I have drunk of a water
That quenches all thirst:— 38

Of a water that flows
With a lullaby sound,
From a spring but a very few
Feet under ground—
From a cavern not very far
Down under ground. 44

And ah! let it never
Be foolishly said
That my room it is gloomy
And narrow my bed;
For man never slept
In a different bed—

For Annie

And, to *sleep*, you must slumber
In just such a bed. 52

My tantalized spirit
Here blandly reposes,
Forgetting, or never
Regretting its roses—
Its old agitations
Of myrtles and roses: 58

For now, while so quietly
Lying, it fancies
A holier odour
About it, of pansies—
A rosemary odour,
Commingle with pansies—
With rue and the beautiful
Puritan pansies 66

And so it lies happily,
Bathing in many
A dream of the truth
And the beauty of Annie—
Drowned in a bath
Of the tresses of Annie. 72

She tenderly kissed me,
She fondly caressed,
And then I fell gently
To sleep on her breast—
Deeply to sleep
From the heaven of her breast. 78

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

When the light was extinguished
 She covered me warm,
And she prayed to the angels
 To keep me from harm—
To the queen of the angels
 To shield me from harm.

84

And I lie so composedly,
 Now, in my bed,
(Knowing her love)
 That you fancy me dead—
And I rest so contentedly,
 Now, in my bed,
(With her love at my breast)
 That you fancy me dead—
That you shudder to look at me,
 Thinking me dead:—

9

But my heart it is brighter
 Than all of the many
Stars in the sky,
 For it sparkles with Annie—
It glows with the light
 Of the love of my Annie—
With the thought of the light
 Of the eyes of my Annie.

10

1849.

Edgar Allan Poe.

HAME, HAME, HAME

HAME, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be—
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree! 2

When the flower is i' the bud and the leaf is
on the tree,
The larks shall sing me hame in my ain
countree;
Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be—
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree! 6

The green leaf o' loyaltie 's beginning for
to fa',
The bonnie White Rose it is withering an' a';
But I 'll water 't wi' the blude of usurping
tyrannie,
An' green it will graw in my ain countree. 10

O, there 's nocht now frae ruin my country
can save,
But the keys o' kind heaven, to open the grave;
That a' the noble martyrs wha died for loyaltie
May rise again an' fight for their ain
countree. 14

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

The great now are gane, a' wha ventured to
save,
The new grass is springing on the tap o' their
grave;
But the sun through the mirk blinks blythe
in my e'e,
"I'll shine on ye yet in your ain countree." 18

Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be—
O hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree! 20
1810. *Allan Cunningham.*

"DOUGLAS, DOUGLAS, TENDER AND TRUE"

COULD ye come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true. 4

Never a scornful word should grieve ye,
I'd smile on ye sweet as the angels do;—
Sweet as your smile on me shone ever,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true. 8

O to call back the days that are not!
My eyes were blinded, your words were few:
Do you know the truth now up in heaven,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true? 12

The Land o' the Leal

I never was worthy of you, Douglas;
Not half worthy the like of you:
Now all men beside seem to me like shadows—
I love *you*, Douglas, tender and true. 16

Stretch out your hand to me, Douglas, Douglas,
Drop forgiveness from heaven like dew;
As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true 20
1859. *Dinah Maria Mulock Craik.*

THE LAND O' THE LEAL

I 'm wearin' awa', John,
Like snaw-wreaths in thaw, John,
I 'm wearin' awa'
To the land o' the leal!
There 's nae sorrow there, John,
There 's neither cauld nor care, John,
The day is aye fair
In the land o' the leal! 8

Our bonnie bairn 's there, John,
She was baith gude and fair, John;
And, oh! we grudged her sair
To the land o' the leal
But sorrow's sel' wears past, John,
And joy 's a-coming fast, John,
The joy that 's aye to last
In the land o' the leal! 16

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Sae dear 's the joy was bought, John,
Sae free the battle fought, John,
That sinfu' man e'er brought

To the land o' the leal!

Oh! dry your glistening e'e, John!

My saul langs to be free, John,

And angels beckon me

To the land o' the leal.

24

Oh! haud ye leal and true, John!

Your day it 's wearin' through, John,

And I 'll welcome you

To the land o' the leal.

Now fare-ye-weel, my ain John,

This world's cares are vain, John,

We 'll meet, and we 'll be fain,

In the land o' the leal.

31

1798?

Carolina, Lady Narne.

A DOUBTING HEART

WHERE are the swallows fled?

Frozen and dead,

Perchance upon some bleak and stormy
shore.

O doubting heart!

Far over purple seas,

They wait, in sunny ease,

The balmy southern breeze,

To bring them to their northern homes
once more.

8

A Doubting Heart

Why must the flowers die?

Prison'd they lie

In the cold tomb, heedless of tears or rain.

O doubting heart!

They only sleep below

The soft white ermine snow,

While winter winds shall blow,

To breathe and smile upon you soon
again.

16

The sun has hid its rays

These many days;

Will dreary hours never leave the earth?

O doubting heart!

The stormy clouds on high

Veil the same sunny sky,

That soon (for spring is nigh)

Shall wake the summer into golden mirth. 24

Fair hope is dead, and light

Is quench'd in night.

What sound can break the silence of despair?

O doubting heart!

Thy sky is overcast,

Yet stars shall rise at last,

Brighter for the darkness past,

And angels' silver voices stir the air. 32

1858.

Adelaide Anne Proctor.

THE PILGRIMAGE

GIVE me my scallop-shell of quiet.
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gauge;
And thus I 'll take my pilgrimage.

6

Blood must be my body's balmer;
No other balm will there be given;
Whilst my soul, like quiet palmer,
Travelleth towards the land of Heaven;
Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains.

There will I kiss
The bowl of bliss;
And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken hill.
My soul will be a-dry before;
But after, it will thirst no more.

18

Then by that happy blissful day,
More peaceful pilgrims I shall see,
That have cast off their rags of clay,
And walk apparelled fresh like me.

I 'll take them first
To quench their thirst

The Prilgrimage

And taste of nectar's suckets,
At those clear wells
Where sweetness dwells,
Drawn up by saints in crystal buckets. 23

And when our bottles and all we
Are filled with immortality,
Then the blessed paths we 'll travel,
Strewed with rubies thick as gravel;
Ceilings of diamonds, sapphire floors,
High walls of coral and pearly bowers.
From thence to Heaven's bribeless hall,
Where no corrupted voices brawl;
No conscience molten into gold,
No forged accuser bought or sold.
No cause deferred, no vain-spent journey,
For there Christ is the King's Attorney,
Who pleads for all without degrees,
And He hath angels, but no fees.
And when the grand twelve-million jury
Of our sins, with direful fury,
'Gainst our souls black verdicts give,
Christ pleads His death, and then we live
Be Thou my speaker, taintless pleader,
Unblotted lawyer, true proceeder!
Thou giv'st salvation even for alms;
Not with a bribed lawyer's palms.
And this is mine eternal plea
To Him that made heaven, earth, and sea
That, since my flesh must die so soon,
And want a head to dine next noon,

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Just at the stroke, when my veins start and
spread,

Set on my soul an everlasting head!

Then am I ready, like a palmer fit,
To tread those blest paths which before
I writ.

58

Of death and judgment, heaven and hell,
Who oft doth think, must needs die well.

1603?

Sir Walter Raleigh.

A BALLAD OF TREES AND THE MASTER

INTO the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to Him;
The little gray leaves were kind to Him;
The thorn-tree had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came.

8

Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.

A Hymn

When Death and Shame would woo
Him last,
From under the trees they drew Him last :
'T was on a tree they slew Him—last,
When out of the woods He came. 16

1884.

Sidney Lanier.

A HYMN

DROP, drop, slow tears,
And bathe those beauteous feet,
Which brought from Heaven
The news and Prince of Peace :
Cease not, wet eyes,
His mercy to entreat ;
To cry for vengeance
Sin doth never cease :
In your deep floods
Drown all my faults and fears ;
Nor let His eye
See sin, but through my tears.

1633.

Phineas Fletcher.

QUA CURSUM VENTUS

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried ; 4

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

When fell the night, up sprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side: 8

E'en so—but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged? 12

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered—
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn appeared! 16

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass
guides—
To that, and your own selves, be true. 20

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last. 24

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there! 28

1849.

Arthur Hugh Clough.

MY LADY'S GRAVE

THE linnet in the rocky dells,
The moor-lark in the air,
The bee among the heather bells
That hide my lady fair. 4

The wild deer browse above her breast;
The wild birds raise their brood;
And they, her smiles of love caress'd,
Have left her solitude! 8

I ween that when the grave's dark wall
Did first her form retain,
They thought their hearts could ne'er recall
The light of joy again. 12

They thought the tide of grief would flow
Uncheck'd through future years;
But where is all their anguish now,
And where are all their tears? 16

Well, let them fight for honour's breath,
Or pleasure's shade pursue—
The dweller in the land of death
Is changed and careless too. 20

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

And if their eyes should watch and weep
Till sorrow's source were dry,
She would not, in her tranquil sleep,
Return a single sigh! 24

Blow, west wind, by the lonely mound,
And murmur, summer streams—
There is no need of other sound
To soothe my lady's dream. 28

a. 1848.

Emily Bronte.

“BREAK, BREAK, BREAK”

BREAK, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me. 4

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay! 8

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still! 12

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me. 16

1842.

Lord Tennyson.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the
night,

All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty years
ago.

All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two and thirty years were a mist that rolls
away ;

For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the
dead,

And all along the valley, by rock and cave and
tree,

The voice of the dead was a living voice to me. ¹⁰

1864.

Lord Tennyson.

WAGES

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an
endless sea—

Little Masterpieces of English Poetry

Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right
the wrong—
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no lover of
glory she:
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be. 5

The wages of sin is death: if the wages of Virtue
be dust,
Would she have heart to endure for the life of
the worm and the fly?
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of
the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a
summer sky:
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die 10

1868. *Lord Tennyson.*

UP-HILL

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend. 4

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn. 8

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.

The Pillar of the Cloud

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
*They will not keep you standing at that
door.* 12

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labor you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yea, beds for all who come. 16

1858. 1862

Christina Georgina Rossetti

THE PILLAR OF THE CLOUD

LEAD, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home--
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene,—one step enough for me. 6

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
Shouldst lead me on
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years 12

So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile. 15

1833.

John Henry Newman

CROSSING THE BAR

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea, 4

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the
boundless deep
Turns again home. 8

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark; 12

For tho' from out our bourne of Time
and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar. 16

1889.

Lord Tennyson.

